COMMENTARY

TRIUMPH OF THE SMOOTH DEAL

The Electorate Plumps for the "Civilized Moderate"

KARL E. MEYER

WASHINGTON

THERE are many obvious things that can be said about the elections of November 4, 1958, and in Washington, where there is little bashfulness about stating the obvious, certain results have been noted with relish.

To begin with, it was clearly a setback for the troglodyte wing of the Republican party, that band of earnest zealots who could have laid fair claim to being the only utopian purists left in American politics. The slaughter was fearful; Senators Bricker (Ohio), Malone (Nevada), Revercomb (West Virginia), and Barrett (Wyoming) were washed under, while Senators Jenner (Indiana) and Martin (Pennsylvania), with wise prevision, retired without facing the voters. As someone wryly observed, if Senator Goldwater (Arizona) had not been reelected, the Daughters of the American Revolution would have found a rostrum bare of senatorial representation at their next springtime convention here.

Equally certain, the two big losers in the vote were Richard Nixon and Carmine De Sapio. The Vice President lost in two ways —both because the Republican campaign into which he plunged so outspokenly was a disaster, and because the voters of New York perversely installed a popular Republican in Albany to harass Mr. Nixon in his pursuit of still higher things. And, conversely, the defeat of Governor Averell Harriman by Nelson Rockefeller meant at least the temporary eclipse of Tammany's Mr. De Sapio as the sun-glassed Warwick of Democratic politics in New York, and hence the nation.

Yet the election returns reflect a more general trend, perhaps more interesting than these concrete results, more interesting even than the resurgence of Democratic strength in the Middle West and New England, or than the emergence of a personable group of new Catholic office-holders (Senators Muskie [Maine], Dodd [Connecticut], McCarthy [Minnesota], and Hart [Michigan], and Governors Brown [California], Lawrence [Pennsylvania], and DiSalle [Ohio]). I refer to the emergence of a new collective personality in American politics, a personality—the word is peculiarly apt—most readily apparent in the Democratic party, but which peeks through among the Republicans as well. It is a personality which seems to herald a new style of politics, a

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new approach to issues, and a new kind of leadership.

At the outset, it should be noted that our political vocabulary suffers from cultural lag. Surely it is misleading to describe the clean-shaven crop of new Senators and Governors elected on the Democratic ticket as New or Fair Dealers. They are, to be sure, "liberals" in the sense of paying their fealty to Franklin Roosevelt, the TVA, and the array of welfare legislation enacted (was it so long ago?) two decades in the past. But New Dealers? Assuredly not. The phrase conjures up a vision of the bold insurgent, the old-style indignant who bristles with reforming zeal, the bogeyman of the Tory press who has a thirst for experiment, a passion for setting the world aright, and a less than reverent attitude to the sanctity of tradition or the tested verities of public finance. Harry Truman and Harold Ickes exemplify the New Deal personality in one familiar form: fiercely partisan, saltily outspoken, and ablaze with righteousness. Or there are Senators Humphrey and Douglas, two true-blue New Dealers who already seem a bit like relics from the past, and who soon may stalk the Senate like Banquo's ghost—as now does Senator Langer of North Dakota, that last survivor of Middle West Republican insurgency. Or, in another variant, the phrase suggests the Brain Truster—the irrepressible innovator, the iconoclast, the impudent thinker who (in Holmes's words) imparts a ferment: Rexford Tugwell, Adolf A. Berle, Jerome Frank, and Thurman Arnold immediately come to mind.

A GLANCE at the prudent liberals who now predominate in the Democratic party—men like Meyner, Kennedy, Symington, Muskie, Jackson, Brown—suggests why this older association simply won't do and why a new term is so sorely required. Indignation, more often, has given way to an earnest sincerity; righteousness to a suave exurbanite manner; passion to a bland smile. And the Brain Truster has been shrunk to a domesticated egghead, content to hatch more modest schemes.

In a phrase, the New Deal has given way to the Smooth Deal, and I do not intend the term to be altogether pejorative. Certainly the older breed of liberals tended to crankiness, to oversimplification of issues, to hyperpartisanship, to irresponsibility, and even (let us be candid) to occasional demagogy—after all, Huey Long's "Every Man a King" nostrum was in some ways a caricature of New Deal thinking. If the Smooth Dealers seem drab and gray-flannel hued by comparison, the new liberals also tend to be more fair-minded, better educated, less hysterical, more aware of the limitations of political reform, and more culturally civilized. One observer here remarked that if either Mr. Kennedy or Mr. Rockefeller became tenants of the White House, at least the quality of the paintings would improve. It is always sobering to recall that Mr. Roosevelt's favorite song was "Home on the Range."

The reference to Mr. Rockefeller as a Smooth Dealer was deliberate; one trait of the new liberal is his marked lack of old-style partisanship—indeed, without a party label it might be impossible to tell the men in the middle apart. Surely it is one of the ironies of the past election campaign that while President Eisenhower was inveighing against the menace of "radicalism," in most major Senate races the Democratic candidate was closer to the Modern Republican ideal than his rusting Old Guard opponent. Many of the Smooth Dealers, in fact, seem perfectly interchangeable, like parts in a 1959 Chevrolet Suburban; it is altogether conceivable that Republican Senators Javits, Cooper, and Clifford Case could run as liberal Democrats, while Senators Kennedy and Harrison Williams could be Republicans whom the New York *Herald Tribune* would beamingly endorse.

This change in tempo and mood was observable throughout the country, but of all the many elections perhaps none was more revealing than the mealtime marathon conducted in New York between Governor Harriman and Nelson Rockefeller, the golden-smiled Gracchus who defeated him. In many ways, Mr. Harriman was the orthodox New

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Dealer unable to learn the new rhythm of politics, but who tried manfully nonetheless, gulping blintzes and pizza with an awesome determination to match every ethnic munch of his foe.

However, like an Old Roman, Mr. Harriman was unable to repackage his wood-crate personality in a more contemporary plastic box. Despite the best coaches, Harriman could not mask his essential inner-directed gruffness with a smile. As a result, Mr. Rockefeller outcharmed his halting rival and made impressive inroads on the traditional liberal-labor vote—especially among the women. What was possibly the most interesting document in the whole national campaign was a column in the New York *Post*, in which one of Mr. Rockefeller's feminine converts explained why at the last moment the house organ of Manhattan liberalism pleaded with its readers not to vote for Governor Harriman. In her "Dear Reader" column of November 7, Mrs. Dorothy Schiff, the *Post's* publisher, confided her feelings:

"It was obvious to those who knew Nelson Rockefeller that he was always a considerate, sincere, warm, very human being. In contrast, people who had worked in close contact with Averell Harriman had often been dismayed by the difficult personality traits displayed by him."

The key phrase is "difficult personality traits." One wonders how the cantankerous John Adams, the withdrawn Abraham Lincoln, the haughty Woodrow Wilson might fare in this Age of Trendex when the political platform seemingly must also be adorned with an analyst's couch.

It is pertinent to ask a few rhetorical questions: How did the Smooth Deal get its start? Why did it find such a receptive audience? And what changes does it involve in the flavor of American politics?

In some ways, the key figure in the 1958 election was a man who was not a candidate at all, nor an office-holder, and who indeed was only marginally involved in the campaign. Yet Adlai Stevenson, despite being a two-time loser for the Presidency, may have had a more pervasive effect on the tone and quality of the campaign than the General in the White House who loosed an occasional thunderbolt, or the Vice President who wielded the more lethal cutlery. The reason is that Mr. Stevenson is both an agent and a symbol of the change in liberal politics, and the election was unquestionably a victory for that moderate brand of liberalism which Mr. Stevenson represents. Closer in conviction, manner, and temperament to Nelson Rockefeller than to Harry Truman, Adlai Stevenson is the example par excellence of the patrician turned politician. Ivy-educated (Princeton, '22), he speaks in the accents of genteel liberalism, and his appeal is strongest to that growing middlebrow-plus group that has cut its teeth on the New Deal, makes knowing cracks about the political slant in *Time*, and furnishes the audience for such diverse phenomena as *Peanuts*, good music stations, and James Gould Cozzens.

To this group, tired of the banalities of the Republican party and too sophisticated to swallow the venerable slogans of the New Deal, the personality of Adlai Stevenson has served as a tonic and a lure. During the Governor's two campaigns for the Presidency, Volunteers for Stevenson flourished with special *élan* in the middlebrow enclaves in the suburbs. (I was at Princeton in 1952 and saw the process at work; if you saw a foreign car on Nassau Street, it invariably sported a Stevenson sticker. Interestingly, the faculty overwhelmingly supported Stevenson, while the students liked Ike, a reversal of youth-age roles which stimulated some lively debate in *Alumni Weekly's* letters column.)

The end result was an influx of new talent, new candidates, and new leadership in the Democratic party—indeed, one began to hear about "Stevenson-type" Democrats, and even "Adlites." Thus, in one of those wondrous ironies of American politics, Stevenson, though twice the loser, presided over a reinvigoration of his party—while the winner, even from the exalted heights of the White House, proved ineffably impotent in his task of "modernizing" the Grand Old

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Party. Despite the best efforts of Robert Montgomery and Henry Luce, the party that boasted the support of the canniest hidden persuaders on Madison Avenue has in six years of power been unable to rid itself of the musty scent of Old Fogeyism. Indeed, it is symptomatic that two of the Republican party's most promising new personalities—Governors Rockefeller and Hatfield (of Oregon)—owed their victory in 1958 in good part to the fact that they avoided identification with their party and administration.

THIS plastic surgery under the auspices of a losing candidate is not without precedent; it has happened at least three times in the past.* There is first of all the case of William Jennings Bryan, three times the Democratic Presidential candidate, three times defeated—and yet successful in restoring to his party something of the radical flavor it had during the Age of Jackson. Before Bryan swept the 1896 Democratic convention with his "Cross of Gold" speech, the party had virtually been held in tithe by the Eastern banks under the brokership of Grover Cleveland. When Cleveland was elected in 1884, Jay Gould exultantly telegraphed: "I feel . . . that the vast business interests of the country will be entirely safe in your hands."

After Bryan took the '96 convention by storm and joined hands with the Populists in a crusade against the "Goldbugs," the party lost its preferred-stock aura and was seldom again regarded as entirely "safe" by the *condottieri* of high finance. Often wrongheaded, pompous, superficial, and plain silly, Bryan had nonetheless breathed back into the party its reforming sense of mission. Richard Hofstadter, who is no admirer of Bryan, concedes this much: "The Commoner, always defeated, had, in the course of a sixteen-year quest for issues, effectively turned public attention upon one reform after another; and many of his proposals had a core of value." Both figuratively and literally (by his votes at the 1912 convention), Bryan made possible the election of Woodrow Wilson, prophet of the New Freedom.

But the Democratic party remained essentially an agrarian party with only transient urban ties until another great loser—Al Smith—broadened its base and turned a minority party into a majority coalition which still holds sway. Samuel Lubell, who first noted its significance, called the 1928 Presidential election the "Smith Revolution" because for the first time the country's biggest cities, with their Catholic-Jewish-immigrant electorate, were carried into the Democratic column. For the most part, the cities have remained there since.

Al Smith, Woodrow Wilson, and William Jennings Bryan—this trinity expresses almost too neatly the multiple personality of the Democratic party, the coexistence of opposites which has given the Democracy so much vitality, inner tension, and "openness"—qualities so lacking in the Republican party during much of this century. Bryan, the agrarian rebel, the "dry," the fundamentalist (who could look with tolerance on the Ku Klux Klan); Wilson, the poised Princetonian of genteel lineage, the aloof idealist who dwelled in a world of rhetoric unsullied by crasser politics; and Smith, Catholic, urban, "wet," who spoke like and for the immigrants eager to ascend from slum to suburb.

Such was the basic coalition which Franklin Roosevelt fused so successfully through four Presidential campaigns, and which prevailed until two other losing candidates—Wendell Willkie and Thomas E. Dewey—found ways of channeling new energy into a moribund Republican party. Indeed, Willkie's prairie-fire nomination campaign in 1940 was reminiscent of Bryan's siege of Chicago in 1896. Willkie, an unknown armed mainly with a chant ("We Want Willkie"), became the catalyst for party reform, while Dewey, possessing the more persuasive leverage of New York's electoral votes, became the executant. Between them, Willkie and Dewey attracted homeless moderates to the

*I am indebted to a conversation with Sidney Hyman, the historian of the American Presidency, for some of these ideas, though I alone am responsible for the form in which they are stated.

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Republican cause, and made it respectable for an intelligent person to confess sympathy for a conservative party. Finally, in 1952, the internationalist and moderately progressive wing of the party rode to power on the coat-tails of a hero whose preeminent virtues were that he was likeable and guiltless of any prior association with the party he was called on to lead.

But this insulation from politics, this above-the-battle pose, which so strengthened Mr. Eisenhower as a candidate, proved a disaster for his party. The election of the General signaled a retreat from politics at precisely the moment when the Republican party could best be purged from within; as a result, the reformation begun by Willkie and Dewey remained incomplete, and the various crabbed rightists who give Republicanism such a sour tone remained unmolested in their local satrapies, unrepentant, unmodernized, and unfumigated. Symbolically, the major edifice built in the Capitol area during the present administration is a memorial tower to Robert A. Taft.

It was within this vacuum created by President Eisenhower's ineptness or indifference that the Stevenson Revolution has taken place. Surely it is a remarkable tribute to the Democratic party as an institution that even in its worst defeats it has found the seeds of regeneration. Viewed in retrospect, even in the midst of the 1952 disaster, the beginnings of change were evident. There was the victory of Senator John Kennedy in Massachusetts, following a cultivated tea-party campaign; and there was the fact that Stevenson carried Philadelphia where a reform Democratic administration had taken office the year before. In Senator Kennedy and Philadelphia's Mayor (and subsequently Senator) Joseph S. Clark, the Smooth Deal found two of its most attractive advance agents.

Senators Clark and Kennedy are preeminently tacticians of the soft sell; suavely tailored and unabashedly good-looking, both speak in the urbane accents of a middlebrow-plus, and can contribute a literate article to the *Atlantic* without any ghostly assistance. Both come from a background of ease and comfort, both attended Harvard, and both brought to politics an attitude of *pro bono publico* (a tag frequently used by Mr. Clark), a clean-cut sincerity, and a modulated commitment to the tenets of the Liberal Enlightenment. In most respects, their views are identical, although Mr. Clark leans a few degrees further leftward; Americans for Democratic Action regards the Philadelphian as a distinguished alumnus, whereas ADA has never quite forgiven Mr. Kennedy for his handsomely profiled timidity on the McCarthy issue. In all, both men would be equally at home at a Fairfield County barbecue—unlikely torch-bearers indeed for a party damned as "radical" by the highest office-holder in the land.

The years since 1952 have seen a steady increase in the ranks of liberal leaders cast in the Stevenson-Kennedy-Clark mold. In 1953, Governor Robert Meyner (Lafayette, '30; Columbia Law School) took control of New Jersey's state house and gave consanguine links to the movement by marrying a comely relative of Adlai Stevenson. Although a Republican Smooth Dealer—Senator Clifford Case (Rutgers, '25; Columbia Law School)—won office in 1954, Mr. Meyner rounded out his triumph by hand-picking and electing the youthful Harrison Williams (Oberlin, '41; Columbia Law School) to the Senate this year.

Meanwhile, in California, the Democratic party was rejuvenated by a "club" movement brain-trusted by Stevensonian Democrats whose leader was Paul Ziffren, a singularly able National Committeeman. Aided by Republican blunders and the clashing sabres of Messrs. Knowland and Knight, the Stevenson wing carried the state this November, electing Edmund (Pat) Brown as Governor, Clair Engle as Senator, and winning control of the legislature. Further northward, in Oregon, another Stevenson Democrat—perhaps too ebullient to be regarded as a Smooth Dealer—was able to add Senator to his frequent byline in *Harper's* and the Sunday *New York Times Magazine*. But if

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there are doubts about Richard L. Neuberger, there can be none about Senator Henry (Scoop) Jackson of Washington; he is unmistakably a member of the Smooth faction. In Idaho, a state where the class war was once more than a slogan, the miners installed boyish Frank Church in the Senate, where at thirty-two he became the youngest of the Smooth.

In Michigan, Governor G. Mennen Williams—of the polka-dot tie and "telegenic" grin—has been creating a private empire since his first election in 1948, six terms ago. By appearance, background, and schooling (Princeton, '33), "Soapy" Williams belongs to the Smooth Deal camp, but politics is too peppery in Michigan and the United Auto Workers too strong, and hence the Governor bears a more leftward reputation. However, the state's new Senator—Philip A. Hart (Georgetown, '34)—shows more moderate inclinations. Minnesota, where the old Farmer-Labor tradition still has a lingering hold, produces politicians too bumptious to qualify as Smooth (e.g. Hubert Humphrey and Coya Knutson), but the state has sent to the Senate Eugene McCarthy, as civilized an egghead as will likely ever grace those chambers.

THE mention of McCarthy recalls Wisconsin, and that curious state (the author of the present article was born there) requires a paragraph of its own. Surely few elections contain as many paradoxes as the special vote held in August, 1957, to fill the vacancy left on the death of Senator Joseph McCarthy, scourge of the Ivy League. Not only did the voters fill his seat with a member of the "party of treason," but they chose a candidate with degrees from *both* Yale ('38) and Harvard (M.B.A., M.P.A.), who also was a former associate in J. P. Morgan's firm, and who had been wed to a Rockefeller. In part, it was a tribute to the personality of Senator William Proxmire, now reelected to a full six-year term, whose youthfully engaging manner contrasted so strikingly with the belch-and-bearhug traits of Joe McCarthy.

Then there is the case of Maine. In 1954, the voters in this most venerably Republican state elected their third Democratic Governor since the Civil War, later reelected him, and this year in the last of Maine's "early-bird" elections sent Edmund S. Muskie to the Senate. Mr. Muskie (Bates, '36, Cornell Law School) is as much Lincolnesque as Smooth, and is among the ablest and most interesting figures in the Stevenson wing of the party. Characteristically, the Maine Democratic party was revitalized by a close-knit group of Stevensonian liberals, including State Chairman John C. Donovan (a Harvard Ph.D. and a professor of government at Bates College), and Frank Coffin (Harvard Law School and Business School) who was reelected this fall to a second Congressional term. In a detailed case study of Mr. Coffin's 1956 campaign, Professor Donovan concluded that the Congressman's victory "may be ascribed to a new sort of politics—a politics of youth, of amateurs, substantially without patronage or corruption."*

Decidedly, there *is* a new sort of politics prevailing in more and more states, and evidence of it can be found everywhere. If the day of the impassioned New Dealer has passed, the era of the hack and the ward-heeler as a candidate is also vanishing. What ever else can be said of the Smooth Dealers, they are neither uninspired nor illiterate, and for this trend to a more enlightened (if skittishly cautious) politics, much of the credit belongs to Adlai Stevenson. It was just and fitting that among the freshmen Congressmen elected in 1958 were two candidates who shared the distinction of serving successively on Mr. Stevenson's 1956 campaign staff in the same post: Ken Hechler (a onetime political science teacher at Princeton) of West Virginia's Fourth District; and John Brademas, of Indiana's Third. Both headed the research division for Mr. Stevenson in a campaign that was a lost

*This is quoted from Dr. Donovan's "Congressional Campaign: Maine Elects a Democrat," one of a valuable series of studies published by Henry Holt for the Eagleton Foundation at Douglass College.

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cause only in a narrow, immediate sense.*

THE elections, then, confirmed the emergence of a novel kind of American politician—the candidate as a confident amateur, who, though he may work in tandem with the Old Pro, strives above all not to look like a politician. Instead, he is a well-adjusted moderate, an affable man in the middle, a Suburban Everyman, only a little bit more handsome. He is a candidate who despite a background of wealth is capable of the relaxed and homely touch: interestingly, Mr. Stevenson's hole-in-the-shoe became a campaign emblem, while Mr. Rockefeller wore a leather patch on his jacket virtually as a panache. He is not afraid to confess that he is educated or has once read (or written) a book. Despite the lamentations of Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., in a much discussed *New Republic* article, the egghead seems very much on the ascendancy in the Democratic party. A census has not yet been made —it would not be surprising if the Ford Foundation set a research team on the job soon—but it seems likely that no Congress in the past century has been so weighted with Ph.D.'s as the upcoming 86th.

Thus, in the framework of liberal politics, the country seems to be entering an era when breeding, intelligence, and the absence of "difficult personality traits" will be every bit as important as the advocacy of issues. This trend to the Smooth is understandable, given the changing circumstances of American life. It comes at a time when mass media, particularly television, turn an exposing lens on every psychic wrinkle a candidate may possess. The phenomenal increase in college attendance has created a favorable climate for a candidate to admit that he once went to school. The tidal migration from the city to suburb and thence to exurb has wrought a change in mores in which the word "togetherness" has a wholesome rather than repugnant ring. And the new style reflects a time when salesmanship has been refined to an applied science, and merchants lavish as much attention on the package as on the product.

It is possible to overstress the manipulative dangers latent in this trend to packaged politics; the voters have shown a commendable discrimination in sifting out the candidates who are merely Smooth. Too much slickness can be as damaging as too much prickliness; *vide* the case of Vice President Nixon, whose image has become so frayed from over-exposure since the time of Checkers, Pat, and that good Republican cloth coat. Mr. Nixon has never been able to rid himself of the slight aura of the disreputable, and today Nelson Rockefeller seems by far the most formidable Republican on the scene. Bets are already on that 1960 will see a contest between Governor Rockefeller and Senator Kennedy—a match between blintzes-eaters and tea-bibbers, as one correspondent dourly predicted here.

Remarks like these—half in earnest, half in mockery—reflect the misgivings about the Smooth Dealers so frequently expressed by those who must keep watch on politics. The absence of passion and purpose in American politics, despite the stimulus of domestic and world crises, is a dismaying reality. Too often the great debates on foreign policy find only a faint echo in the Senate. There are honorable exceptions—notably Senators Humphrey, Morse, and Fulbright—but on questions like Quemoy and Matsu, European disengagement and nuclear tests, the clash of debate is missed the more for its manifest need. In the twilight years of the Eisenhower administration, it is especially melancholy to contemplate a Congress where dissonance is muted in the interests of avoiding a "controversial" stand. It is painfully symptomatic that the intellectually liveliest

*Space is lacking for an adequate discussion of the effects of Senator Estes Kefauver's two losing campaigns on the recruitment of new talent for his party. In those states where the Tennessean's delegates carried the Presidential primary, there was often an invigorating effect on the local Democracy. Convention delegates elect the National Committeemen, and thus it is possible for insurgents to dislodge an enfeebled party bureaucracy—a virtue of the primary system often overlooked. In South Dakota, where the Democrats are now resurgent, this revitalization born of the Kefauver campaigns is particularly notable.

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debate in the recent lackluster campaign was over an article which charged that eggheads had been slighted in three local campaigns.

In a mood of stoic resignation, one Washington correspondent prepared a spoofing recipe for the "Instant Presidential Candidate," which goes like this: "Take one package of quick-frozen smiles, garnish with Ivy, place in flip-top box, and soft-boil in melting-pot politics; sauté with two teaspoons of *eau-de-madison,* skewer on a Gallup Poll. Baste in Teleprompter before serving. Feeds 180,000,000."

The burlesque is broad and not necessarily prophetic. If it is too early to applaud unreservedly the rise of the bland new men of politics, it is equally premature to scorn the Smooth as ineffectual. The new Congress may provide clues for a firmer judgment—especially when the fledgling legislators find that it takes more than a statesmanlike speech on Cyprus or an apt quote from Aristotle to win a national headline.

Events generate their own pressure, and the new Senate Democrats may find that it is tactically unfeasible for everyone to sit astride the Golden Mean, even though Majority Leader Johnson may benignly insist that it is the safest place to perch. Heywood Broun accurately remarked that no body politic is healthy "until it begins to itch." It would be unthinkable that the 86th Congress, so filled with restless young legislators, will not restore a little more health to the body politic when there are so many issues itching to be scratched.

CHILD'S GAME, ON A JOURNEY

SPENCER BROWN

Two children in the bus seat opposite me,
  Tired of the rolling earth,
Begin to play the simple and old game
  Of paper-stone-and-scissors.
The winner each time gets to give
    a slap
  On the loser's tendered wrist.
After a mile of scores, when both are
    smarting,
They agree to tally without punishment.
  The game goes on and on.

Chant one-two-three: on *three,* shoot out a
    hand
  As a fist, for a stone;
Or fore- and second fingers, for a forfex;
  Or palm open, for paper.
Stone breaks the scissors; scissors cut the
    paper;
  Paper wraps up the stone.
Impelled by fascination or inertia,
As now intellect wins, now crude hunch, so
  The game goes, on and on
Into the drugged journey. I nod; I start
  As the bus seems to run
Backward in time; I doze half-willingly
  To the charm of treble chant
And childhood war. Before closed eyes I see
  The clenched fist, the stone,
The concentrated rigor of the world
On which concerted swords must break,
    although
  The game goes on and on

And war cuts down the writer, burns the
    books,
  And silences all our words
But one-two-three. On *three,* shoot out a
    hand
  As a round, steadfast stone—
And the dreaming eye of man sees it spin
  Outlasting man and war,
And a poem wraps it up in a sheet of paper
As the bus runs forward and backward into
    time
  And the game goes on and on.

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NEW YORK'S PUERTO RICANS

Formation and Future of a New Community

NATHAN GLAZER

NEW York's Puerto Rican immigrants, who have already established a community in the city larger than the population of Seattle or New Orleans, are a historical accident. When mass immigration from Europe was shut off in 1924, it seemed reasonable to expect that the last great wave of foreign immigrants had swept through the city. For a century it had taken in great numbers of Irish, Germans, Jews, Italians, Poles, Greeks, and other Europeans. But in 1924 it appeared that this movement had come to an end. For where were further foreign migrants to come from? The Mexicans, who did not fall within the scope of the quota law, stayed in the Southwest. The French Canadians, also outside the quota system, did not venture beyond New England.

New York City was still a magnet for migrants, but now they were English-speaking migrants, young men and women from all over the country, and Negroes from the South. For twenty years there was no considerable foreign immigration. The European refugees were relatively few in number compared to the immigrant movements of the past. The New York City public schoolteacher could always expect to have a few children from foreign countries, but the experience of whole classes, whole schools, of children who did not speak English, was, it seemed, a thing of the past.

In 1898, however, a major potential source of non-English-speaking migrants had been placed under the American flag, free from the operation of the restrictive immigration laws which came into effect in the 20's, and free, too, from the kind of administrative border controls that keep down immigration from Mexico today. Puerto Rico took a long time to discover New York. Why the beginning of mass emigration was delayed until 1945 is hard to say. From 1929 to 1939, the depression kept down immigration to this country, except in the case of political and religious refugees; after that year the war made normal immigration difficult. But in 1945, with the war ended, with prosperity continuing, and with a cheap airline service operating to New York, a path from the island to the city was finally opened. In twelve years the city has been transformed. Today, almost 10 per cent of the population of New York is Puerto Rican, and the percentage will certainly continue to rise. In Puerto Rico itself, the population has more than doubled since 1898, with births exceeding deaths by 65,000 a year. There is no reason why, in a prosperous year on the mainland, Puerto Rican immigration should not go to 70,000 (as it did in 1953), and even in a relatively poor year (as in 1954) one may expect more than 20,000. But this is only one source of the increase of New York's Puerto Rican population—another is the high rate of increase of the Puerto Rican population already in New York. Any relatively young group like the New York Puerto Ricans may be expected to have an exceptionally high birth rate; but the Puerto Ricans of child-bearing age have a birth rate higher than that of other New Yorkers.

New York, certainly, is only at the beginning of its Puerto Rican epoch. The majority of Puerto Rican migrants will continue to come to New York because it is a short airplane ride away, it offers a wide array of jobs to unskilled workers with no or little knowledge of English, its wage rates are

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good, and it is easy to go back home from New York if one wishes (and there is much movement back and forth). Indeed, New York is today more attractive to Puerto Rican migrants than it was thirteen years ago: the mere fact that 650,000 or more Puerto Ricans now live there means that it is a much better place to live for the others just arriving. It has more stores, churches, movie houses, institutions, dance halls, organizations, and newspapers run by and for Puerto Ricans. It has more employers used to Puerto Rican labor and willing to employ it. And its institutions—its schools, hospitals, welfare and social services—have adapted themselves to the special needs of their new clients and are understanding of their special problems. Regardless of how things appear to the casual observer of the overcrowded Puerto Rican quarters, life in New York is far better for Puerto Ricans than it is in Puerto Rico, and far better than it was for European immigrant groups earlier.

THERE is sometimes an advantage to being historically exceptional: the Puerto Ricans are unquestionably better off than they would have been if they had begun their immigration in 1925 instead of 1945. For in those twenty years two things occurred in the world that transformed the way the city would meet a great wave of poor, foreign, and, to some extent, racially different migrants. Those two things were the depression and Nazism. The depression led to the creation of a great structure of special services for the poor and all those afflicted by the accidents of a modern urban society. More than that, it resulted in a change in dominant attitudes toward the poor. For twenty years the national administration was in the hands of a party dependent on the votes of the poor and the recently poor. By 1945, the experience of depression and the New Deal had convinced everyone that the poor were entitled to assistance from the government.

New York's welfare services, public and private, in 1945 were probably the best in the country. Indeed, as the old immigrant quarters emptied out, the institutions that had served them and developed rare skills in doing so found themselves with underemployed resources. In 1945 a poor family on the Lower East Side could find private institutions ready to supply an unexampled range of services—day care for pre-school children, supervised play and clubs for older children, classes for adults, music lessons and art lessons, free milk, lunches, and snacks, and a great deal more.

But in addition there was the impact of Hitlerism and the Second World War, which by reaction had helped to create a sympathy for the racially different. This sympathy was not strong enough to overcome the longer established and deeply ingrained prejudice of Americans against the dark-skinned, but nevertheless it offered a great deal of competition to that older feeling and muted any easy expression of aversion. In New York City the decline of racial prejudice had been most marked. The Jewish group had strong reasons to oppose the expression of prejudice and discrimination. New York State had been the first to pass a law against discrimination in the sale of housing, and the first to pass a law against discrimination in employment; the city was the first to pass a law against discrimination in the rental of housing. New York, one could fairly say, was the ideal place for foreign immigrants marked by quasi-racial characteristics (as is true of the Puerto Ricans, with their markedly Negroid and Indian features).

There was only one serious obstacle facing the Puerto Rican migrant. In 1945, and indeed until the present day, living quarters in New York were scarce and expensive. Since there had been little residential building for fifteen years before 1945, since New York was entering on a period of prosperity which severely taxed its existing housing resources—how was it possible for Puerto Ricans to find any place to live at all? This was the gravest problem they faced—but here too the fates were kind. The particularly strict rent control laws of the State of New York stimulated landlords to seek out every possible means for increasing the income

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from their properties. The chief means was by "furnishing" and subdividing existing apartments. Furnished rooms and apartments, "hotel" rooms, new apartments gained by subdivision—all were exempt to some extent from the restrictions of rent control. And so the Puerto Ricans became the first great immigrant group that did not begin its career in the traditional immigrant quarters. Even so, it was not easy for the Puerto Ricans to find places to live, but without rent control's stimulating landlords to devise new accommodations it would have been literally impossible and there might not have been any large-scale Puerto Rican immigration at all. If the Puerto Ricans found it hard to find places to live, their neighbors found it equally hard to move away. All were thus forced into a closer proximity than they might have wished, and the Puerto Ricans were unable to preempt one large area as their central settlement. They had to move in where they could. The process of subdivision brought them into middle- and upper-middle-class neighborhoods throughout Manhattan, and for the first time the whole process of acculturation, instead of going on inside the borders of some great ghetto, took place right under the eyes of the middle classes. Even so, the Puerto Ricans have been subjected to less discrimination than any previous large immigrant group. Of course they have poorer quarters, and pay more for them—but this is mostly because they are newcomers, have little money, and are only gradually learning how to deal with New York's peculiar housing market. Of course, too, they have the inferior jobs—but again this is mostly because they are newcomers, not well educated, and often do not speak English, or speak it poorly. And of course there is widespread expression of distaste—but this is purely personal and the press and the public authorities are careful to avoid evidence of prejudice. The public authorities in particular, aware that the Puerto Ricans are citizens and may vote, are notably friendly. When we consider the impact of the West Indians in London, we may appreciate how remarkable has been New York's calm and efficiency in absorbing much greater numbers of Puerto Ricans.

Indeed, when one considers the way the older New Yorkers calmly adapt themselves to the problems of a school system that can no longer offer their children the education it did (it must devote itself to the more pressing problems of the newcomers), of neighborhoods in which overcrowding creates an insuperable garbage-disposal and noise problem, of public parks that seem to have become the preserve of the Spanish-speaking, one may well ask whether there is not something oddly quiescent about New York's acceptance of the Puerto Ricans. Is this not another case of the New Yorker's complete helplessness in the face of "trends" and "developments" which perpetually transform his environment and which he makes little effort to combat or to guide? I believe it is. The New Yorker is indifferent to his neighbor—for many reasons which I will not go into, for my subject is the Puerto Ricans, not the New Yorkers. And he is as indifferent to the Puerto Rican as he is to anyone else. Living right next door to an apartment house (now calling itself a "hotel," or announcing "furnished singles and doubles"), he will simply step carefully to avoid banana peels and watermelon rind, and know little and care less about the life lived within twenty feet of his apartment.

THREE books have recently appeared which seek to describe and understand the life of the New York Puerto Ricans; only the first in a stream that will certainly grow, they are by a journalist, an anthropologist, and a doctor.* They permit one to begin to outline the special characteristics of the Puerto Ricans. These books, with varying degrees of success, describe the characteristics of Puerto Rican life in New York City, and help enlighten us as to what the

*_The Puerto Ricans_, by Christopher Rand, Oxford University Press, 178 pp., $3.75; _Up from Puerto Rico_, by Elena Padilla, Columbia University Press, 317 pp., $5.00; _Eighty Puerto Rican Families in New York City: Health and Disease Studied in Context_, by Beatrice Bishop Berle, Columbia University Press, 331 pp., $4.75.

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impact of Puerto Rican immigration on New York has been.

New York, I have suggested, has served the Puerto Ricans well—by the standards that commonly prevail in such matters as mass immigration. Now I would like to turn around and ask, how well has it been served by the Puerto Ricans?

To begin with, there is one way in which the United States, and New York too, has always been well served by its immigrant groups, and the case of the Puerto Ricans is no exception: New York has a great number of dirty and poor-paying jobs which, in the absence of new immigrants who will take them because they have no alternative, must be given to the incompetent and unreliable. It is these jobs that the Puerto Ricans have taken—preparing food, clearing dishes, making beds, washing linen, all the work that must go on because New York provides entertainment and services for the rest of the nation in its restaurants and hotels. The restaurant and hotel trades are now so heavily dependent on Puerto Rican labor that it is hard to see what they would have done for help had there been no Puerto Rican migration—perhaps a heavier inflow of Negroes from the South would have taken place. The Puerto Ricans have gone into other work, too, particularly light factory work, and the women have gone into the garment trades.

And yet, while we in America expect the immigrant to work hard at a dirty, ill-paying job, we do not expect him to stay at it forever, and we certainly do not expect his children to follow him in it. And we will not consider an immigrant group desirable if it is content to remain in such work. How a society is to reconcile the expectation that everyone will rise with the fact that there is an irreducible minimum of jobs which are unpleasant and poorly paid, I do not know—however, American society has not yet been forced to this reconciliation, for even after European immigration was cut off, Mexicans, Negroes, and Puerto Ricans were available to take up the work at the bottom. Nor do I know how it is possible to reconcile a widespread racial prejudice, which makes social advance difficult, with the universal insistence that only such advance makes life worthwhile. Indeed, it is the tragedy of the Negroes that they are in this impossible situation, and the Negro crime rate is part of the result.

American society supplies two paths for this upward movement: small business and education, both relatively open to the ambitious, both requiring only small capital investments which should be available to some among even the most impoverished ethnic groups. And the two generally work together: the small improvement in the economic situation of the small shopkeeper or manufacturer permits him to maintain his children in school and permits them the more striking movement upwards that is characteristic of the second generation. This pattern has been the characteristic one for those groups—such as the Jews and the Japanese—which have made the most striking advance. It demands that the group should have the skills, ability, and energy to engage in business; and that it should have the outlook that sees education as a good (whether for itself or as a means to better-paying jobs hardly matters), and the ability to inculcate this outlook in its children.

THE Puerto Rican group in New York has already shown that it can make the first move, from work for others to self-employment, and on a fairly respectable scale. In this respect, it has already distinguished itself from the two other major migrant streams with which it has a certain kinship, the Mexican and the Negro. These latter groups have not been especially successful in moving into self-employment. Obviously, discrimination—in getting credit, for example, has hampered all three groups. And yet there has been a difference among them, I think, in the ability to overcome discrimination. There are certain forms of business enterprise that involve very little capital and very little in the way of help from others—all those, for example, that involve services to one's own group, such as grocery stores and

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restaurants adapted to the specific tastes of the group, or special agencies dealing with some need of the group—arranging passage, transfer of money, and so on. A group may supply such services for itself and thus begin to collect small reserves of entrepreneurial skill and capital from which larger enterprises may grow, or it may allow these services to be supplied by others. The Puerto Ricans in New York supply these services for themselves. The first sign of Puerto Rican movement into a neighborhood is the *bodega*, or grocery store, and the store advertising *pasajes*—tickets for trips to Puerto Rico. These are run by Puerto Ricans themselves. In the denser Puerto Rican neighborhoods, almost every retail establishment is run by Puerto Ricans. Indeed, so active are they in this respect that, as Christopher Rand points out, they will often run stores for the Negro group, despite the fact that the latter have been settled in New York far longer than the Puerto Ricans. In Chicago, where the two Spanish-speaking streams of migrants, Mexicans and Puerto Ricans, meet, the Puerto Ricans, again demonstrating their entrepreneurial superiority, are much more energetic in striking out for themselves.

What explains this difference? It is one of the virtues of Rand's book that he is the first (as far as I know) to attempt to describe and explain it. The American occupation of Puerto Rico introduced a number of influences from the mainland:

> American business went in and began selling American goods by American methods—today one hears that Puerto Ricans know much more about installment buying than other Latin-Americans. They have also acquired a hunger for the gadgets money can buy. . . . Many Protestant missionaries also went to Puerto Rico from the mainland after 1898. . . .

And he quotes a sociologist on the impact of this movement:

> The new missionaries . . . began presenting Christianity to the island as a religion of works—linked with uplift, change, ambition and all that—rather than a religion of the *status quo*, as Spanish Catholicism had been. They founded schools, hospitals, and farm-improvement stations. They taught a belief in material progress. . . . In short, they implanted the so-called Protestant ethic on the island, and this led, inevitably, to things like a new middle class, a new money economy, and bigger commercial cities.

One may see how different this was from the experience of the American Negroes, freed from slavery and yet living in a society which continually impressed on them their inferiority or incapacity; or the Mexican immigrants, coming from largely Indian villages and towns that had been influenced little by the Mexican national government and economy, let alone the much more active type of government and economy introduced in Puerto Rico after 1898.

What we speak of is a tendency; how extensive and significant a tendency, it is not easy to say. Its causes are even more speculative. Yet it promises that within not too many years there will be a Puerto Rican middle class of some size; and that middle class will represent a major step toward the solution of what New Yorkers conceive of as the Puerto Rican "problem." For if this middle class develops, the Puerto Ricans, despite the large dark-skinned element among them, may be looked upon as, say, Italians are today—as an assimilating ethnic group, rather than a special racial group.

The development of a Puerto Rican middle class, if it occurs, may be made possible by the leaving behind of the dark-skinned members of the group in the Puerto Rican ghetto, the latter thus failing to share in the advance of the group and being assimilated in the minds of Americans—and in actuality—to the American Negroes. Evidence in all three books suggest such a possibility. On the other hand, if the Puerto Rican group maintains its unity—as is likely, owing to its rather strong national feeling (perhaps the development of a sense of nationality binding dark-skinned and light-skinned together is another unanticipated gift of American occupation)—if it remains cohesive, while one part of it rises, then we shall have a new situation in America: a dark-skinned element that is *socially* similar to one of the white ethnic groups. One wonders whether there

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will be any special burden of discrimination or prejudice that it will have to bear. I suspect not—at any rate in New York, where law is rapidly wiping out the last pockets of permissible discrimination, by public or private bodies. In this case, the prejudice against Puerto Ricans may be no more severe than that against recent European immigrant groups, and then the example of a dark-skinned ethnic element akin in social status to European ethnic groups may do much to weaken prejudice against Negroes.

But is the shopkeeping propensity, about which there can be no argument, sufficient to create a Puerto Rican middle class? Is there a tendency for Puerto Ricans to go into the potentially more lucrative forms of enterprise? Do the many thousands of Puerto Rican women in the garment trades suggest the possibility of Puerto Ricans owning and managing their own small garment factories—a path which many Jews trod to membership in the middle class and eventually great wealth? Is there a tendency for Puerto Ricans, again like the Jews before them, to own and manage the highly profitable rooming houses, hotels, and apartment houses in which they are now packed? Puerto Ricans would have some initial advantage in both types of business—they would know the language of their workers and tenants, they would be better acquainted with their foibles, they would be better able to get workers and tenants when these are scarce. There is no discussion in these books of this type of enterprise (though the Puerto Rican foreman in the factory employing Puerto Rican labor is already common). It would be important to know if this is happening.

However, there is evidence, unfortunately negative evidence, as to the Puerto Rican propensity to take the other great path upwards, through education. If one result of the American occupation was acquaintance with both the products and outlook of modern industry and commerce, one might well expect that another result would be a positive orientation toward education. In the U.S. itself, vast sums have always been spent on education, and the same has been true, *mutatis mutandis,* in the American possessions. Puerto Rico has benefited from this American propensity, and now possesses an effective system of education headed by a university that is probably one of the strongest ever developed in "colonial" territory. The Puerto Rican migrants are therefore better acquainted with the potential benefits of education than other groups have been. Dr. Padilla writes:

> Among parents, formal education for their children is regarded as having a very important role in their aspirations . . . education is highly valued by all Hispanos. . . . Among recent migrants one of the foremost goals in their coming to New York is connected with educating their children to an extent they could not have achieved in Puerto Rico.

And yet: "A large number of children of migrants quit school as soon as they can get working papers or as soon as they have passed the required age for compulsory schooling." The Puerto Ricans do indeed value schooling—in this respect they are distinguished, for example, from the Mexicans; yet the attitude of their *children* to school is not markedly different. In view of the group's strong drive for social and economic advancement, why does one not see Puerto Rican children knocking at the gates of the high schools and colleges, as other education- and mobility-oriented ethnic groups have done before them? True, there is a language problem—but other groups have had the same problem. One suspects that the language problem is more serious for the Puerto Rican group—because of the proximity of the island, the frequent trips back and forth, the significance of Spanish as distinguishing the darker-skinned Puerto Ricans from the American Negroes.

Perhaps there are other reasons, too, for this apparent failure of the Puerto Ricans—up to now—to take advantage of New York's educational opportunities. Every group that emphasized education has been driven by the desire for material achievement and security. However, a rather special attitude to material gain must characterize those who

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take the long road of education to achieve it: an ability to defer gratification, perhaps based on the experience that gratification will not be permanently deferred. Perhaps, too, the material environment of New York is too overwhelming to permit deferment of gratification; perhaps American influence in arousing a taste for material possessions in Puerto Rico has been too successful and children will not hold off leaving school to get jobs. And perhaps, for various reasons, New York schools are unrewarding and unpleasant for Puerto Rican children, though these schools have made and are making a great effort.

One is in any case at some loss to understand the failure of the Puerto Ricans to make intensive use of the educational path upwards. Yet if a sizable core of well-educated individuals fails to develop, the movement of the entire group will be seriously affected. It will possess only a small professional elite whose services will go to outsiders, it will have insufficient leaders, it will not be able to provide well-trained people for the share of public offices its voting strength should gain for it—in short, it will be seriously hampered in changing from a group that is a "problem" to a group that is a self-respecting and respected part of society. Unfortunately, we learn all too little about this aspect of things from our three books, and yet a good part of the future of the Puerto Ricans in New York (and of New York itself) depends on it.

THERE is another aspect of Puerto Rican experience in New York that is striking—the dependence of the Puerto Rican group on the elaborate structure of services for the poor and unfortunate that has been erected in New York City. It is of course not surprising that a new immigrant group should take advantage of whatever aid and services are available. What is surprising about the Puerto Ricans is the manner of their dependence. In the case of many Negroes in Northern cities, we may properly speak of the helpless dependence on public aid of people whose misfortunes have become too much for them. In the case of the Puerto Ricans, we must often speak of the active adaptation of a people to all the services that a modern welfare state makes possible. Among Puerto Ricans, there is less helpless dependence—though there is certainly a good deal of that—and rather more of what we may call the instrumental use of welfare state services to work out the best possible life for oneself. Concretely, what this means is that state and private services are made part of the pattern of one's life, and used with all the skill one can muster to serve the general aim of "progress." I do not refer to relief alone. I also have in mind the special Puerto Rican attitude to the public hospitals, the police, and the various social welfare and social work agencies. Perhaps a few quotations from Dr. Padilla will suggest something of the character of this relationship:

> A child who does not obey his parents . . . may be reported to a social agency. In the latter instance the parents want him placed in a school where "he will learn" and where he will be living away from the family. . . .
>
> The individual who wants to make trouble for another with the police watches for some "legal technicality," such as throwing garbage or water out of the window, on which to have his enemy delivered a summons. . . .
>
> When a quarrel or dispute may possibly lead to a *compromiso* (a tough situation in which life or personal freedom may be risked . . .) the police are called to prevent the *compromiso* from burgeoning. Thus a lovers' spat may be reported to the precinct if it is interpreted as leading one of them to suicide.

Perhaps the most striking case is that of young Juan and Maria. They had had sexual relations.

> The following day she told her best friend about it. . . . Her friend, a woman who had lived in New York for several years, told her she had to go to the police and inform them so that Juan would marry her. Maria went to precinct headquarters and told the desk sergeant that she had lost her virginity . . . the policeman . . . said, "This is [statutory] rape," and . . . she argued with him that it was not. . . . Maria [later] explained [to the anthropologist] that [as she understood it] if she accused Juan, he must then either marry her

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and honor her, or . . . have to go to prison.

Puerto Ricans expect and hope that the government will take an active role in the solution of personal and family problems when these become too heavy to bear, or demand some expert handling. We learn that wives will leave husbands who are cruel to them or fail to support them, knowing they can go on relief, get help with their children, or get jobs—and this inevitably raises the power of women, and quite changes the relation between men and women in the family. Puerto Ricans with health problems, we learn from the excellent study of Dr. Berle (conducted in the same neighborhood investigated by an anthropological team headed by Dr. Padilla), will come to New York to take advantage of its free medical services for the poor—and this becomes one of the causes producing the steady movement to New York. During the first year of migration there is a very heavy use by Puerto Rican families of hospital services, reflecting both this pattern of getting one's medical problems solved on arrival, as well as, more unfortunately, the fact that the first years after migration are likely to be those in which serious accidents occur.

When we look at this pattern in the light of the history of other ethnic groups, we recall that other migrants from agrarian and backward regions have shown a timid and even fearful approach to government and authority. The experience of a society in which one depends on a network of personal relations, largely based on kinship, to maintain security—and this is the experience of the Puerto Ricans, in large part, just as it has been the experience of other migrants —makes it very difficult for one to know how to make use of those formal and bureaucratic means for maintaining or restoring security which the modern state has established. In particular, immigrants from traditional backgrounds have feared government interference with traditional family arrangements, its power to interfere with the way they handle their children, even to the extent of taking the children away and placing them in institutions. Such immigrants often fear hospitals, too, as places where parents and children might be spirited away for who knows what dread operation. But it would seem to be the case that this fear of government and bureaucracy hardly exists among the Puerto Ricans. They see government as benign and all-competent; this attitude permits them to plan their lives in such a way that government and its services may play a significant role in them. Of course, there are numerous and often terrible problems of misunderstanding, incapacity, helplessness, confusion—Puerto Rican families are often made miserable by the mysterious workings of bureaucracy, often come to grief in their inability to understand how to get the benefits these bureaucracies exist to dispense. And yet it is also true that the Puerto Ricans manage these things better than we might expect, and perhaps better than other immigrants in the past did.

To find out what the government allots to the indigent and troubled, and how benefits may be obtained, is no simple matter, particularly if one is not at home in the language of the government agency. It takes special skills and a good deal of time. These skills are sought out and valued by the Puerto Rican community. The store advertising *pasajes* will also generally indicate that the services of an *abogado* (lawyer) is available. "Recent migrants," Dr. Padilla tells us, "have a strongly legalistic orientation and are very much concerned with such matters as using the legal systems to protect their rights. . . . People who 'know the country' are asked about 'good' lawyers 'who don't sell out' and 'who talk in court.'" Elsewhere we learn that inquiries will be made about good social case-workers or investigators. There has developed within the Puerto Rican community a cadre of individuals who speak a fluent English, who dress and argue well, and are thus felt to be capable of guiding the less competent through the maze of agencies and procedure which he must thread to get relief, medical assistance, compensation for injuries, and so on.

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I think it is historically something quite new that an impoverished immigrant group should see government not as an awesome power to be propitiated, or a threat to be circumvented, but as a positive good to be cultivated. As Dr. Padilla says at a number of points, the Puerto Rican acts on the premise that in this country "the law is for the worker and the poor." Within this general orientation, of course, the Puerto Rican is well aware of the fact that not everyone is on his side. Thus, there is considerable ill-feeling between the New York police and the Puerto Rican population. The police are perhaps the arm of government that finds it hardest to accept the modern social-work, welfare-state outlook. The Puerto Rican will also encounter unsympathetic social investigators, and unsympathetic and perhaps even prejudiced hospital attendants and doctors. But this leads him not to withdraw but rather to complain, to demand his rights, to seek out other, more sympathetic, representatives of the universal good which is the state.

How may we reconcile the entrepreneurial energy and drive that we have earlier described as the heritage of American administration, with this positive attitude toward government aid that seems to be equally a part of that heritage? There is no necessary conflict—except in terms of the mythology of free enterprise, which assumes that success is something gained in the teeth of government interference and opposition, or, at least, in an atmosphere of governmental indifference. The Puerto Rican wishes to be successful and independent. He comes to the mainland to seek "progress." But insofar as fate—because of accident or illness (the common disasters of the poor and mobile), or a large family—makes it impossible to achieve this goal, he accepts the necessity of getting government assistance. It is considered improper, Dr. Padilla tells us, for a man to seek assistance if he is capable of working. Work, and progress through work, are still the first goal. However, this feeling coincides with a fairly heavy dependence on relief. This may be justified in many ways. Relief is for one's wife and children, not for oneself. Indeed, a good deal of relief for Puerto Ricans is of the supplementary assistance type, in which an income insufficient to maintain a large family is helped out by payments necessary to bring family income up to some fixed minimum. Then, too, Dr. Berle suggests, a man may interpret his failure to hold a job or get a good one as caused by illness, which will justify him in seeking and accepting government support. There are unquestionable trends in Puerto Rican attitudes that work against dependence on government—in particular, a strong sense of dignity, a strong feeling about the things that shame one. But the needs of one's children, or illness, will overcome the feeling that the acceptance of relief affects one's dignity or is shameful. And under these circumstances, the Puerto Rican will address himself to the problem of getting this aid with efficiency and competence, and will on occasion even express pride in his management of the complex procedures necessary to get all the types of assistance to which a large family with insufficient income is entitled.

It is worth considering what the Puerto Rican pattern of life in New York City adds up to. Here is a group that is energetic and strongly oriented toward material progress; that has positive attitudes toward education but does not seem to be able to implant them in its children; that accepts as part of its outlook on life that government and private bureaucracy should play a large role in offering aid and solving individual problems. One must say that the picture is not very different from that of present-day Americans in general, except that the heritage of "self-reliance," as against dependence on state and private bueaucracy, which today plays a largely mythical role in this country, never played much role in Puerto Rican life, and consequently places little restraint on a relatively uninhibited and instrumental use of formal agencies for aid and assistance.

The experience of the Puerto Ricans in Puerto Rico itself is decisive in the estab-

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lishment of these patterns; their experience in New York will be decisive in either maintaining or altering them. We do not deal, as far as we know, with any immutable characteristics of a Puerto Rican "national character." The most authoritative study of the people of Puerto Rico (*The People of Puerto Rico,* by Julian Steward and others) points out how varied are the circumstances under which Puerto Ricans live, how different consequently are the people in the plantation areas from those in the small-farm areas, how different the upper classes from the agricultural workers, and both from the developing middle classes. Of course, there are also common elements in Puerto Rican life—the Spanish language, certain kinds of music and dancing, certain customs. But most important in making the Puerto Ricans a single group is a common experience—and the common experience of the American occupation and American influence (though it has of course affected different groups differently) has been perhaps most decisive. It explains much that we will consider "typically Puerto Rican" in New York. For example, it is responsible for the fact that the Puerto Rican experience with government has been on the whole a positive one. For decades, the role of government on the island has been all in the direction of a sound and understanding solution of problems. Economic enterprise is encouraged, the land problem is handled reasonably, taxes are low, migration is intelligently guided. Wherever its hand is visible, government has operated to alleviate misery and encourage enterprise. Why should not the Puerto Rican conceive of government as benign, intelligent, competent? One might point out that Puerto Rican society in its leading representatives sees the future of the island as dependent on the maintenance of a subtle interdependence with the United States, one in which benefits are maximized and deprivations minimized; its greatest political leader is great because he manages this delicate relationship. In the same way, it would appear, the individual Puerto Rican, on the humblest level, may see his future as dependent on mobilizing the interest and good will of the proper public authorities.

WE HAVE said that the Puerto Rican is not so different from the American; we might then add he is not so different from all those people in the modern world for whom government plays a decisive role. We have discovered in the last ten years with what incredible speed the ancient forms of a society may be overturned and transformed by the forces of government. The character of the oldest continuous civilization in the world has undergone such a transformation. It is not surprising that Puerto Rico, too, with a relatively weaker traditional culture than China, should be transformed by a weaker and more considerate governmental intervention. As the writers of *The People of Puerto Rico* point out:

> Institutionalized changes have been destroying the personalized, hierarchical, and authoritarian relationships of the older hacienda system and the isolation and self-sufficiency of the small subsistence farmer. All socio-cultural segments of the island are becoming more alike in their cash-mindedness—their dependence upon wages, the purchase of manufactured goods, the decline of home industries—their stress on individual effort, their utilization of national health, educational and other services.

And they conclude:

> If national character has meaning in the case of Puerto Rico, it must be considered as a trend toward the values and practices of industrial civilization. . . .

I believe this is so. I have said that Puerto Ricans are, in their leading orientations, not so different from Americans. And now one must add: they are, in their leading orientations, not so different from what people everywhere are becoming under the impact of common forces which make us all more alike. In considering the potentialities of these orientations for creating a satisfying life for them in New York, we consider, in a measure, ourselves; and in a measure, everyone else.

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TWO "SAVIORS" WHO FAILED

Moses Merin of Sosnowiec and Jacob Gens of Vilna

PHILIP FRIEDMAN

A PARTICULARLY bitter aspect of the catastrophe which befell the Jews at Hitler's hands was the manner in which a number of them, in various towns and ghettos, were tricked into collaborating in their own destruction. This was a terrible lesson, and not for Jews alone, in the futility of trying to turn a totalitarian program from its intended ends by compromising with it.

Yet we should not condemn out of hand the two figures whose short and miserable passage across the scene of Jewish history is recounted here. Never was there so hopeless a trap as that in which millions of Jews were caught when the Nazis overran Eastern Europe. Hope being all the more necessary where there is least reason for it, they had in those trying months and years to invent it, to clutch at every straw and believe in and magnify every illusion. Few Jews were more self-deluded than those whom the Germans appointed to "govern" the Nazi-created ghettos; they thought they could use their figmentary power to influence the real course of events, and by sacrificing some Jews save the rest. Their tragedy turned into a moral as well as physical one.

The most destructive and demoralizing of all the tricks played by the Nazis on their Jewish victims was to grant the ghetto communities into which they were herded the appearance of self-government. In the macabre farce which ensued, "autonomous" Jewish councils and Jewish ghetto elders played the chief roles. Some ghetto "rulers" were invested with authority over the Jewish inhabitants of whole districts and provinces, and several became so drunk with their illusory power as to lose their moral balance as well as whatever sense of responsibility they may have originally had. One such dupe, Chaim Rumkowski of Lodz, was strikingly portrayed by Solomon F. Bloom in these pages ("Dictator of the Lodz Ghetto," February 1949). Here are the stories of two others.

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I

THE twin cities of Sosnowiec and Bendin (Bedzin) lie in the Polish Silesian coal fields near the old German border. They had a total population of some 180,000 in 1939, of whom 55,000 to 60,000 were Jews. The area was taken by the Germans in the very first days of the war, and German troops entered Sosnowiec and Bendin on September 4, 1939.

A group of Jews in Sosnowiec were being manhandled by German soldiers in a particularly sadistic way when, abruptly, one of their officers ordered those in the group who were members of any Jewish communal body to make themselves known immediately. At first no one dared to step forward, but finally a small, insignificant-looking man detached himself from his fellows and resolutely walked forward. He was Moses Merin, a member of the town's Jewish council and an adherent of the Revisionists, the radical right-wing Zionist party. Though in his thirties—some claimed he was thirty-eight—he looked no more than twenty-five. Very thin, actually weighing only eighty-eight pounds, he had strongly marked features and keen eyes. After greeting him with a few blows, the Germans proceeded

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to make Merin their liaison man with the Jewish population of Sosnowiec.

Several weeks later the Germans set up a Jewish community committee and made Merin its president, and then, toward the close of 1939, named him head of a newly formed Central Committee of Councils of Elders for East Upper Silesia. Thirty-seven Jewish communities, with about 100,000 "subjects," were placed under the "Central's" autocratic authority, which Merin wielded personally and exclusively. Before long he was having himself called *"der Leiter"*—the Leader, almost like Hitler himself (*"der Führer"* being prohibited to Jews).

The "Leader" ruled in the manner of a despot, engaged in a great deal of organizational activity, and displayed a prodigious amount of energy in general. Appointing and dismissing Jewish community officials at will, he named provincial ghetto dictators so that the smaller units of his empire could be ruled as autocratically as the whole, and he created so-called advisory councils to serve as the instruments of these lesser dictators. He levied heavy taxes on "his" Jews, which he fixed in each case according to his own arbitrary judgment, extorted contributions, confiscated furniture for the use of the Germans, and organized forced-labor squads. Jews who showed signs of disaffection were curbed by the threat of deportation to German labor camps. He also formed a Jewish militia or police and even set up elementary schools.

The "Central" had about 1,200 employees, in addition to those of the local Jewish communities in Sosnowiec and Bendin and in the provincial towns. Thirty close associates chosen from among the department heads of the "Central," and the elders and officials of the larger Jewish community councils, functioned as Merin's personal staff. Some of his most intimate friends were included in this "brain trust"—among them his personal secretary, Fanka Czarna, who accompanied him on more important trips and acted as his interpreter from time to time, since his own German was inadequate.

Thanks to his connections with the Germans, Merin was able to get in contact, through neutral countries, with foreign and overseas Jewish organizations. He was also one of the few *"Oberjuden,"* or "top Jews," to enjoy a certain freedom of movement inside the different towns under his control, or even beyond the confines of his empire, to confer with the local ghetto leaders. In August 1940 he surprised the Jewish overseers of the Lodz ghetto, which lay outside his area, with the news that the American Joint Distribution Committee was ready to contribute $100,000 via Lisbon for the relief of their community. The Nazi superintendent of the ghetto administration in Litzmannstadt (as the Nazis called Lodz), Hans Biebow, got confirmation of this from the directors of the German Bank in Berlin, and a certain part of the sum named was actually remitted, it seems, to the Lodz council of elders (at the official rate of five marks to the dollar). But the records do not tell how much money Merin, the "honest broker," received for his own domain.

His fame grew and he became an almost legendary figure. In a conversation recorded in August 1942 by a chronicler of the Sosnowiec ghetto (P. Wiederman), Merin stated:

> Before me nobody ever had as much power over Jews as I have in my region. I wanted to extend this power to cover almost all the Jews of Europe, but a few wretched individuals blocked my way for the sake of their own ambitions and thus condemned their communities to destruction. The blame belongs to Dr. Hirsch in Berlin, Bieberstein in Cracow, and Rumkowski and Czerniakow in Lodz and Warsaw.

These words may not be authentic, but given the jealous rivalry among the various ghetto dictators, each of whom saw himself as a sole savior chosen by providence to rescue his people, they sound plausible enough. It seems certain that the "three emperors," Merin, Rumkowski of Lodz, and Czerniakow of Warsaw, did meet for a conference, probably in August or September 1940. The fact is mentioned in many of the memoirs of the three different ghettos. Their

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meeting apparently produced no concrete results: none of the three would give in to the others, each maintaining that his own plan of salvation for the Jews was the only right one. Nor was Merin able to get his "line" accepted in any of the other Nazi-created ghettos in Poland.

Did Merin believe in all seriousness that the Nazis would permit the creation of an all-embracing organization of Jews? *"Führer"* notions played no small part in his "ideology," which appears to have been pieced together from all the banal political phrases current in Hitler's Europe. One of his speculations ran like this:

> The Jews have always been a stubborn people, a "stiff-necked people," as Moses called them. They refused to obey or carry out the orders of their superiors. In our whole history no leader has ever appeared able to compel them to obedience. But none of them felt himself in possession of the force and strength I have. . . . I am the only one who was able to impose unconditional obedience upon his community.

His megalomania is further revealed in these words: "An inner voice said to me: 'Thou, Moses, art called upon to deliver thy people from out of Hitler's slavery as thy predecessor once led them out of Egyptian bondage.' I deeply believe in this inner voice."

Parasites and worshipful retainers dancing attendance upon him seem to have strengthened Merin's belief in his mission. One of the scholars of Sosnowiec, a Rabbi Grossman, had the temerity to flatter him at a public meeting with the well-known saying about Maimonides, "From Moses to Moses [Maimonides] there was none like Moses." But loud cries of protest came from the audience: "It's a shame for a rabbi in Israel to say things like that!"

Merin himself indulged in fantasies bordering on insanity:

> I will not be afraid to sacrifice 50,000 of our community in order to save the other 50,000. Then at last will my fame spread abroad through the whole Jewish world. In Palestine, the new homeland, I shall be received in triumph. Then only shall I appear in my full glory, and my capacities for leadership find their true field of action. I will create a great army equipped with modern arms that will back up our influence on world politics.

But Merin's Messiah complex and all his spouting did not have much effect, seemingly, in the way of inspiring confidence in him among his closest associates, or even among those humbler. Secretly, his associates made fun of him.

A DRAMATIC session of Merin's "brain trust" was held before the first deportation of Jews from Sosnowiec, in May 1942. The "Leader" proposed that the "Central" itself undertake the deportation in order to prevent the Germans from carrying it out with their customary brutality. Several members of his staff argued, however, that this would be against Jewish ethics, and cited a classical passage from Maimonides: "When the enemy demands of a group of Jews: 'Sacrifice one in your midst and the rest will be spared for it,' the group ought to submit to collective death rather than abandon the innocent man to his fate!" Right after the meeting a violent controversy over this quotation took place in the rabbis' council of Sosnowiec. (In Vilna, Kovno, and Heidemuehle near Turek in the neighborhood of Lodz, similar disputes took place on the eve of deportations, with the same Rambam text as the starting point in each case.) But against Maimonides and tradition, Merin asserted his own code, according to which only the lawgivers of the new order had the right to decide who was to live and die.

He was supported by several rabbis who argued that deportation, taken literally, did not mean death but forced labor, and who agreed that a "selection" conducted by Jews themselves would be preferable to one conducted by Germans. Nevertheless, the majority voted against Merin. In 1941 the director of the forced-labor section of the "Central" had already resigned in protest against his policies; now several other of his higher officials resigned. To maintain his control, Merin felt obliged to demote some of his council elders and even to denounce one of them, Bezalel Zucker, the Jewish elder of Chrzanow, to the Gestapo.

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But Merin could not stifle the spirit of resistance among the various Jewish party and youth organizations, which had already begun underground activity against the Nazis in 1940. On the eve of that first deportation in May 1942, all the Jewish political parties issued a joint call to the Jews of Sosnowiec urging them to resist passively, and as a result only eleven Jews appeared in response to the 2,500 "invitations" that the "Central" sent out. Merin proceeded thereupon to carry out the "selection" by himself, with the aid of his Jewish militia, and when he had rounded up enough deportees he marched at their head to deliver them to the Germans personally. (Among the deportees was Rabbi Englard of Sosnowiec, who strode dignifiedly in their first row.)

Merin was able to compel the employees of his "Central" to collaborate with him in organizing the second transport of deportees from Sosnowiec. In the same period thousands of Jews were deported from the outlying ghettos under his rule. From May 1942 until the middle of July, 15,000 of "his" Jews were sent off into the unknown, none of whom ever came back.

At this point the underground Jewish organizations redoubled their fight against Merin, issuing proclamations and leaflets to inform the Jews of what was going on, and calling on Jewish workers to sabotage the work they were doing for German war industry. In Sosnowiec leaflets were distributed to the Wehrmacht itself, and preparations were made for armed resistance. Jews were provided with forged "Aryan" papers, and men and information were smuggled across the Slovakian and Hungarian borders. In the summer of 1942 two representatives of the Jewish resistance in Warsaw, Mordecai Anielewicz of Hashomer Hatzair (he was to lead the Warsaw Ghetto uprising in 1943) and Eliezer Geller of the Gordonia, made their way to Sosnowiec for an emergency conference.

How well informed Merin was about all this underground activity is unknown, but the propaganda against him must have told him something. It is said that he tried to get in touch with the resistance leaders in order to convince them of the correctness of his "salvation policy," but got no reply. In the autumn of 1942 the Jewish organizations decided to put him out of the way, assigning the job to Zvi Dunski, the leader of Sosnowiec's Hashomer Hatzair, but the attempt was given up because of the heavy militia escort that accompanied Merin wherever he went.

On German orders, Merin staged the largest "mass review" of his career in the summer of 1942. All the Jews of the three cities of Sosnowiec, Bendin, and Dabrova were gathered together, and they stood, 50,000 of them, all one August day waiting to be chosen for death. More than 25,000—over half—were taken for Moloch. Merin also put in an appearance in other towns of his empire to witness the "selections." Gerda Weissmann Klein, an eyewitness and a victim of the deportations, describes in her memoirs, *All But My Life* (Hill and Wang, New York, 1951), the sudden commotion that swept the Jews awaiting deportation at the railway station in her native town of Bielitz (Bielsko) in Silesia:

> From mouth to mouth the news traveled: "Merin!" Merin was here. The king of the Jews, as he was called, had arrived. . . . I looked at him now. He was short, perhaps, a bit over five feet, pale and thin; he had watery eyes, dull brown hair, and he was clad in a brown raincoat. He talked in a hoarse whisper. He pulled a bottle of schnapps from his pocket, drank first and then handed it to the SS men about him. They drank after him. I saw it all and marveled. Yes, he was all right for them, he was their kind. . . .
>
> Merin was walking in our direction. Mama prompted me, "Go ask him if we are going to Wadowitz."
>
> I asked him in Polish—it was known that his German was very poor.
>
> He looked at me, his eyes without expression.
>
> "Are you crazy?" was his hoarse reply. . . .
>
> We had assumed all along we were going on a train [to Auschwitz, for extermination] but now a truck came for us. I was the last one to enter it. Then I screamed, "I want to go to my mother!" [who was put on the train for

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Auschwitz] and jumped down. Just then Merin passed. He looked at me, and with strength unsuspected in that little man, he picked me up and threw me back on the truck.

"You are too young to die," he said tonelessly.

I glared at him. "I hate you," I screamed. "I hate you!"

His eyes were without expression; there was a faint smile on his pale thin lips. It would have been easy for him to order me down and send me with my mother. Why did he not? Strange that the man who sent my mother to death had pushed me into the arms of life!

Merin's self-confidence remained intact:

I feel like a captain whose ship was about to sink and who succeeded in bringing it safe to port by casting overboard a great part of his precious cargo.

But where exactly was his "port"? It dwindled in the end to two miserable suburbs, into which the remnants of the Jewish communities of Sosnowiec and Bendin were herded after a succession of "selections."

Merin continued to work with the diligence of a beaver—automatically and with a faith in the efficacy of what he was doing that by then must have appeared shockingly meaningless. He reorganized the Jewish militia, dismissing those of its members who had made themselves hated by their brutality during the deportations. Thereby he managed to get rid of some of the blame involved and even to regain the trust of many of his subjects, who praised their "Leader's" righteous justice. In other ways too he labored constantly to keep his influence over the people, and tried to explain himself in a speech denouncing the underground Jewish organizations:

"I know of the plans and preparations of the young people. . . . I know also of the foreign passports that come from Switzerland. . . . I warn you. . . . I stand in a cage before a hungry and angry tiger. I stuff his mouth with meat, the flesh of my brothers and sisters, to keep him in his cage lest he break loose and tear us all to bits. . . . And nobody shall dissuade me from this course. I will not do what Czerniakow did in Warsaw. . . . I will not commit suicide! Oh, would the day come when you will be in the position to judge me. Let history pass sentence upon me!"

This speech was delivered early in 1943 in the little ghetto of Srodula, on the outskirts of Sosnowiec, into which Merin's once mighty Upper Silesian empire had finally shrunk. About this time the Germans decided that they needed Merin no longer; they could take care of the rest of "his" Jews themselves: "The Moor has done his job, the Moor can go." Toward the end of June 1943, Merin and several of his closest associates were invited to German police headquarters for a meeting. On the face of it, it was a routine conference like many held before. But Merin and his friends never returned from it. It was said later that they had all been sent to Auschwitz.

The disappearance of their "Leader" was regarded by the remnant of Jews in Srodula as a hard blow. They suddenly felt deserted. On the whole, they remembered Merin with affection. Many pitied him. He was no longer looked upon as one who had helped bring about misfortune, but as one who had tried to avert it. They wished and yearned for his return. Such is the effect of a forceful personality. But if Merin had succeeded in duping them, he himself had been even more duped.

II

THE social and cultural atmosphere of Vilna's Jewry was altogether different from that of Sosnowiec's, and offered less favorable prospects for an experiment in autocracy. The "Jerusalem of Lithuania," with its 60,000 to 70,000 Jews, had the 18th-century Gaon to its credit, and was a main center of the Hebrew and Yiddish literary revivals, as well as the seat of many Jewish national and social movements. Vilna's Jews were enlightened and alert, and the course of events there after the Germans came was somewhat different than in Sosnowiec, though no less terrible.

Vilna was occupied by German troops on June 24, 1941, two days after the beginning of their attack on Russia. A Nazi-appointed Jewish council was set over the Jewish community—which did not prevent 21,000 Vilna Jews from being slaughtered before the rest

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of them were shut up, on September 6, 1941, in two separate ghettos, one of which was soon "liquidated." With the creation of the ghettos, a Jewish police force was recruited and an obscure young man named Jacob Gens made its chief.

Gens came from Kovno, was a Revisionist Zionist like Merin, and belonged to the Brith ha-Hayal. He had served as a volunteer in the Lithuanian struggle for independence, becoming an officer in the Lithuanian army, and it was probably his good connections with the Lithuanian nationalists that led to his appointment as police chief. Why he accepted the job remains something of a mystery. He had come to Vilna with his wife, a Lithuanian Gentile, and their daughter, both of whom were permitted to live outside the ghettos as "Aryans." Gens himself could have easily hidden among his Lithuanian friends, as did other Jews who survived the war. Dr. Mark Dworzecki, a leader of Vilna's Jewish underground who survived to write the best and completest chronicle of the fate of Vilna's Jewry under the Nazis (*Yerushalayim d'Lita in kamf un umkum,* Paris, 1948), quotes a conversation he had with a wonderful Lithuanian woman, Ana Simaite, who saved many Jews. She knew Gens's family and reported that in his first letter to his wife from the ghetto he wrote: "For the first time in my life I carry out tasks like these. My heart is bleeding. But I will always do what is best for the Jews in the ghetto."

His duties were not easy, what with one "*Aktion*" or "operation" following another and each meaning a new blood bath. The Jewish police had to help drag the appointed victims from their homes, subdue by force those who resisted, and stand guard over them until the SS led them off.

November 24, 1941, was a St. Bartholomew's Night in the Vilna ghetto, but not the first one. What marked it off from the others was that it was the "night of the yellow certificates," the "life certificates" that the Germans intended to grant to some 16,000 Jews as documentary evidence of their "economic usefulness" to Germany and therefore of their right, and that of their families, to go on living. Gens was ordered to hold a mass review at which these certificates would be distributed; all the Jews who did not receive them were to be deported.

The inhabitants of the ghetto did not know the purpose of the review but had a foreboding of something terrible. Gens, surrounded by his policemen and a few SS officers, had the Jews march past him while he counted, "One, two three—one, two, three," and divided them into two columns by touching the marchers with his stick. Those chosen for work—and life—were led into the yard of the Jewish council's building. A family of five came toward him, and Gens waved the man, his wife, and two of their children into the garden, but the third child to the other side. The parents uttered heart-rending cries, and the crowd murmured, "Gens is a Jewish murderer, he's a traitor." Another family marched up, and Gens counted, "One—father, two—mother, three—child—" and then suddenly broke off to yell at the father: "You rascal you, where did you lose your child?"

When the man answered in confusion that he didn't have a second child, Gens began to beat him with his stick, and while doing so touched the neck of a twelve-year-old boy with its tip. He immediately pulled the boy out of the crowd and shoved him toward the man, crying, "Here, you fool, here's your child! Don't lose him again, you jackass you!" Then he imperiously pointed his stick toward the yard where stood the saved. Now the crowd murmured, "Gens saved the boy. He is a Jew, after all. Gens has two souls, he's a mystery."

A Jewish poet commemorated this occasion by putting the words, "One, two, three —one, two, three," into a poem which a ghetto composer set to music. The song caught on in the ghetto and since then has become one of the most popular of all Yiddish ghetto folk songs.

THERE were *Aktions* in November in Vilna, and *Aktions* in December. Twenty-seven thousand more Jews were killed out-

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right between September and December, mostly in mass executions in a place outside Vilna called Ponary. Thousands of others were deported. Eighty per cent of Vilna's Jewish population was gone by the end of 1941, when a period of "stabilization" set in. "Maybe that was the German blood quota," the surviving 20 per cent told themselves. "Now only the 'economically useful' ones among us are left. German industry needs workers. Work will save the ghetto."

Gens preached work. He made many speeches to "his" Jews. In one he said:

> We must show that we are very useful. . . . Work, especially work for the Wehrmacht, is the order of the day. . . . There are now 14,000 workers in the ghetto . . . and we must do everything to increase our production. . . . Jewish workers must give up easy jobs and take other [more strenuous] ones in order to increase their usefulness—for the sake of the collective interest of the ghetto.

The authority over Vilna's Jews was all this while shifting from the Nazi-appointed Jewish council to Gens and his police force, and in July 1942 he was officially made governor of the Vilna ghetto by the Germans. He announced his appointment in a succinct proclamation smacking of Napoleon's battle orders—the "Gens Manifesto," it was called in the ghetto. Once again he preached the doctrine of work:

> The basis of existence in the ghetto is work, discipline, order. Every able-bodied inhabitant of the ghetto is a pillar upon which our existence depends.

That evening Gens staged a solemn review of his police force, which was followed by a banquet that became known in the ghetto as "the coronation feast." For the first time the Germans allowed flowers to be brought into the ghetto from the "Aryan" part of Vilna, and all the ghetto dignitaries attended.

Jewish wit had a mordancy all its own in Lithuania, and Gens seems to have taken it into account. He had a cage set up in the yard of the Jewish council's building with a live goose in it as an emblem, more or less, of the ghetto's "ruling house"—the Yiddish word for goose, *gans*, sounding very much like Gens. The Jews of Vilna sensed the self-mockery in this, and they all came to admire the goose—which, not accidentally, was being fattened—and it was commemorated in many humorous songs and verses.

DURING the first and relatively quiet phase of Gens's dictatorship there was a kind of cultural renaissance in the Vilna ghetto. A Yiddish theater, a Hebrew dramatic workshop, an orchestra, a workers' auditorium, children's and youth clubs, a music school, choir, a vaudeville theater, several yeshivas, an athletic club, elementary schools, professional schools, clubs for literature, for teachers, and for engineers, a scholarly society, Brit Ivrit, and other activities were started. The police, for their part, gave balls, dances, parties. Certain of the policemen, along with what speculators and war profiteers there were in the ghetto, were possessed by an insatiable craving for pleasure: *Après nous, le déluge!*

"Jacob the First," as they called Gens in Vilna, became a patron of the arts and sciences. Literary gatherings were held in his hall, and a "Vilna Ghetto Publishing House" was founded on his initiative. Though nothing was ever actually printed, he had authors paid for every sheet of manuscript they turned in. He also had historical documents on the ghetto carefully collected and preserved. He sponsored a theater that in 1942 gave a hundred and twenty performances, with a total attendance of 38,000 (the items of its repertory were serious throughout, and mostly classical). But Gens's chief love was the children and their schools; he visited these personally, took an interest in their curricula, and diligently attended their ceremonies. During the Passover of 1942 he himself took childlike pleasure in the performance of a ghetto Haggadah specially composed by children in which he figured as a hero. At the joint ceremony of all the ghetto schools at the close of the school year in the spring of 1943, he delivered a speech to the children in which he said:

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Be comradely, little brothers, respect your parents, love your people, and work for the ghetto. Be proud and brave Jewish children.

Gens also gave the main speech at the founding of the ghetto's athletic club, which soon had some 400 young members, and whose field was his favorite place of exercise during the summer. Whether he was aware that this field became the main meeting place of the Jewish underground resistance organizations in Vilna is not known.

Many new workshops were opened in the ghetto, and Gens tried to raise the living standards of his subjects. He got permission from the Germans to cut down part of a forest near Vilna for firewood for the ghetto, and it was promptly dubbed "Gens's Forest" (Yaar Gens) in ironical allusion to Herzl's Forest in Palestine. Later, the Jews of Vilna came to appreciate this forest more seriously, since it was the only place where they could work in the open and enjoy fresh air as well as trade with peasants for food and prepare hiding places. It was there, too, that feelers were put out to make contact with the partisans who roamed the wooded country all around. Gens may or may not have known about this.

Meanwhile his fame and power grew. A few months after being appointed governor of the Vilna ghetto he was made governor of all the ghettos and Jewish work camps under German civilian authority in Vilna district and in a part of White Russia as well. To all these new "colonies," he sent his police to establish his kind of order. Like Merin in Silesia, he ruled with a strong hand. His courts of justice even had the power to pass death sentences, and in June 1942 they condemned six Jews to death —five for a murder they had committed in the Vilna ghetto, and one for having been instrumental as an informer in bringing about the massacre of the Jews in the Lida ghetto by the Germans. The sentences were executed by the Jewish police, and afterwards Gens maintained that these punishments did much to discourage murders in the Vilna ghetto.

His Jewish police were empowered to administer corporal punishment to men and women, and some of his policemen proved to be rough and sadistic. Gens's deputy chief of police, Salek Dessler, became an agent and symbol of corruption and demoralization. And a number of young women who worked for the police—in particular one known as the "beautiful Thea"—exercised a marked influence over Gens himself. As a Jewish writer of Vilna expressed it, "Many no longer believe in deism but in 'theism.'"

Gens did not kowtow to the Germans, who called him "the proud Jew." Once, after an air raid by the Russians, a group of Germans invaded the ghetto in order to "take revenge on the Jews," but Gens had them thrown out and handed over to the German military police. The Nazis' Lithuanian auxiliaries, as well as the German ghetto guards, feared Gens like death.

Although his police were generally hated, Gens himself was trusted and respected by many of the Vilna Jews—at least until the mass deportations of the summer of 1943. "Gens is smiling: everything is all right," they would say. "Gens is gloomy: things are bad, there are dark clouds over the ghetto." People wanted to persuade themselves that, in spite of everything, they did have a benevolent and powerful guardian angel.

TRY as he did, however, Gens could not win the approval of the more politically conscious and responsible Jews in the Vilna ghetto—not even in the best days of his regime. They held demonstrations to protest against the "selections," and the holders of "white cards"—that is, those Jews not considered "economically useful" and therefore liable at any moment to deportation—even demonstrated once against the brutal behavior of the Jewish police. "Trials of Flavius Joseph and Herod" were staged by the historical section of the ghetto youth club in which the allusions to Gens were unmistakable. But Gens himself did not perceive any resemblance between his role and that of the two renegades who had curried favor with the Roman enemy. The parallel he

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assigned himself was much loftier, and the same as that which Moses Merin fancied for himself. Nusia Dlugi, a girl active in the Jewish underground, tells in her reminiscences: "Gens regarded himself as the *second Moses;* he would say again and again, 'You Jews will see, I'll lead you out of the ghetto.' "

At the opening of the theater he sponsored, leaflets with black borders were distributed among the crowd: on them was printed "No theater performances in a graveyard!" After the "night of the yellow certificates" a delegation of rabbis went to Gens and told him that he lacked the right to undertake "selections" and decide which Jews were to die and which to live. They quoted to him the same famous passage from Maimonides that was used against Merin in Sosnowiec. Even earlier, an "emergency committee" composed of twenty persons representing each of the Jewish political parties had been formed in Vilna, and in the course of time this committee, which opposed Gens uncompromisingly and enjoyed great respect, developed into a kind of ghetto parliament. Thus Gens began to see opposition growing up all around him.

He continued to assure "his" Jews that they could face the future with confidence, but they refused to believe him. Hiding places were dug in the air-raid bunkers in the ghetto, and in the sewers. A whole underground city came into being, the "Secret City" described so vividly in Abraham Sutzkever's poem of the same name. One bunker was converted into a school that could accommodate eighty children. Gens's *Judenrat* (Jewish council) was referred to more and more often as his *Judenverrat* (treason to the Jews). And, punning again, the Vilna Jews circulated the saying: "People in the ghetto pay more attention to *katchkes* than to *gäns*" (*katchkes,* meaning ducks, standing here for wild rumors, and *gäns,* meaning geese, for Gens's reassurances). In the effort to fight this distrust Gens made many speeches, some of them remarkable for their candor. One, delivered at a distribution of literary prizes in the ghetto coffee house, amounted to a confession and an apologia.

> Many of you look upon me as a traitor, and many of you wonder by what right I come to your literary gatherings. I, Gens, am leading you to your death, yet I, Gens, want to save you from death. I, Gens, let you dig your dugouts, and I, Gens, try to bring work, life certificates, and benefits to the ghetto. *I balance the accounts of Jewish blood, and not those of Jewish honor.* When the Germans ask me for one thousand Jews I give them that number. Otherwise they would come themselves and take not one but many thousands. With a hundred victims I save a thousand people. With a thousand I save ten thousand. You are people who work with your minds and your pens. You don't come in contact with the dirt in the ghetto. And if you survive, you'll say, "We came through with clear consciences." If I, Jacob Gens, survive, however, I shall have come through all covered with dirt and with blood dripping from my hands. Yet I will offer myself for trial, before a Jewish court. I will say: "I did everything to save more Jews in the ghetto and bring them to deliverance. And in order that some should survive, I alone have had to lead Jews to their death. In order that some people should be able to come out of the ghetto with clean consciences, I had to wallow in filth and act without conscience."

Gens was probably honest in stating what he felt and how he saw—or wanted to see—the situation. But was he moved only by a spirit of self-sacrifice, and not by ambition and lust for power? Was he not exposed to temptations and tests such as no human being ought to know?

At the beginning of 1943 the Germans ordered the Jewish police of Vilna to go to Oszmiany and carry out a deportation there. Fourteen hundred Jewish victims were demanded. After hard bargaining Gens managed to reduce the number to 400, but only on condition that the Jewish police itself carry out the "selection." When Gens returned to Vilna after having complied with this condition, he called his higher police officers, the Jewish council, and the rabbi of Vilna to him in his apartment. To them he declared: "In Kimelishki and Bistritz the Germans carried out *Aktions* by themselves, without help of the Jewish po-

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lice. They slew the *entire* Jewish population. In Oszmiany only 400 out of 4,000 perished. We intend to save as many as possible in this way, even though my heart bleeds in the course of it."

Shortly afterward, all the Jews still left in the small towns in the area were transported to Vilna. Gens announced that they as well as the Jews of Vilna could go to Kovno if they wished and report for work there. Many, especially among the new arrivals, offered to do so in the prevalent belief that the German administration in Kovno was more humane than that in blood-drenched Vilna. Gens personally led to Kovno the 5,000 who volunteered. As it appears, he did this in all honesty and with the best of hopes. On the afternoon before the journey he went to bid his Gentile wife goodbye. "I don't like his optimism," Mrs. Gens said to Ana Simaite. It turned out that she had good reason not to. For the Germans, instead of sending the trains to Kovno, turned them off to the execution grounds at Ponary just outside Vilna, where their occupants were slaughtered *en masse*. "Operation Kovno," they called this in the ghetto. At Ponary Gens was arrested by the Germans but promptly released, and he returned to Vilna without hue and cry, locked himself in his room, and refused to talk to anyone. The legend of his great influence and his own belief in his mission as a savior were gone.

Until then Gens had played for time. He had believed what Martin Weiss, a high-ranking Gestapo officer whom he used often to invite to lunch, told him: that the Vilna ghetto would be spared from total destruction because of its importance as a workshop. Gens had thought to buy time by periodically sacrificing small numbers to Moloch, but he began to look for another way out.

Toward the end of 1941 a Jewish combat organization had been formed in the Vilna ghetto. On New Year's Day, 1942, it issued its first call to the Jewish population: "We do not want to go to the slaughterhouse like sheep, we want to fight!" By the end of January 1942 all the political groupings of the ghetto were represented in the organization—the Zionists, Hashomer Hatzair, the Bundists, Revisionists, and the Communists. It was called the "United Partisan Organization," or "FPO," and worked under a single unified leadership.

From the beginning Gens's attitude toward the FPO was uncertain and wavering. He was a man full of contradictions and whims, easily influenced, and able to change his position unexpectedly and abruptly. Several chroniclers of the Vilna ghetto, most of them former members of the FPO, maintain that Gens helped the organization; that he knew about the Jews who fled to join the partisans in the forests, and would let the ghetto gates stay open at night in order to make it easier for them to escape; and that he even contributed money to the FPO for the purchase of arms. Some even claim that he was secretly preparing his police for the time when he would lead them over to the FPO. But other chroniclers say that Gens demanded the disbanding of the organization, offering in exchange further guarantees of peace and security for the ghetto. Still others term him bluntly a traitor. Shmerke Kaczerginski writes that Gens made advances to the FPO: "But he was so entangled in a thick web of blackmail and corruption that with the best will in the world he could not help himself."

This last remark holds the key perhaps to an understanding of the "Gens complex." He remained, as he had been before, an autocratic ruler. His ambition and his belief in his saving mission prevented him from subordinating himself to others. This may also explain why a united resistance front was never achieved in the Vilna ghetto, and why it was haunted instead by the specter of a fratricidal struggle. What is certain is that this specter caused the FPO's carefully prepared plan of battle against the Germans to be completely frustrated in the end.

BEFORE the war Joseph Glasman had been commander of the Revisionist Betar and a member of the editorial board of the Revi-

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sionist publication, *Hamedinah*. After the Nazis came he was appointed vice-chief of the Jewish police force of Vilna, a step to which his party consented because it hoped to secure great organizational advantages and freedom of movement thereby. At the same time Glasman became a member of the FPO's inner staff of command—according to some chroniclers, the FPO's first meeting took place in his apartment. He was at that time made head of a "special section" whose function was to gather intelligence, unmask Gestapo agents and informers, and keep a check on FPO members themselves. This special section even had men in the Jewish police.

Energetic and of great ability as an organizer, Glasman soon became popular in the ghetto. This aroused Gens's jealousy, and he was removed from his post as vice-chief of police under mysterious circumstances. Some chroniclers claim that Glasman himself asked the leaders of the FPO for permission to resign. At any rate, after his dismissal he was made head of the ghetto's housing office. Suddenly, an order came from Gens to go to Sventzany and clear up the housing situation in the ghetto there. But Glasman, guessing that a deportation from Sventzany was being prepared, and that he was to be made an accomplice in the crime, refused to obey the order. Gens called his policemen together, denounced "the rotten intelligentsia that was carping at the difficult work of the police," and had Glasman arrested and put in chains.

An FPO group attacked the police and succeeded in freeing Glasman after a short clash. The threat of civil war in the ghetto that then arose was only averted when both sides agreed to negotiate. Reluctant to reveal the identity of its leaders, the FPO sent only members of its Communist faction to the peace talks. It was in July 1943, the Russians were knocking at Lithuania's door, and Gens had become very tender toward Communists. But he must have soon succeeded in winning the confidence of the FPO, for all its leaders took part in the later talks. A compromise was reached. Glasman was given a symbolical punishment by being sent, this time unchained, to dig peat in a labor camp. (After a short time he was released, and returning to the Vilna ghetto, he organized a group flight to the forests in July 1943. There he became one of the leaders of a fighting unit called "Revenge," which he recruited eventually to a strength of several hundred men. Not long afterward Glasman met his death in a clash in the woods with German or Lithuanian forces.)

Gens's symbolic victory over Glasman was followed by a purge of all the latter's followers in the Jewish police. But hardly was this accomplished before a new conflict threatened to divide the ghetto. On July 9, 1943, the Germans arrested two Polish Communists in Vilna, one of whom admitted having been in contact with Jewish Communists through Itzek Wittenberg. The Gestapo ordered Gens to hand Wittenberg over to them. Apparently, the Germans had still not discovered the existence of the FPO, or they would have asked for the whole staff of that organization, not just the Communist Wittenberg.

Gens acted with craft. In his usual way he invited the FPO leaders to an emergency meeting with him at midnight of July 16. Lithuanian auxiliary police, led by Gens's deputy chief, Salek Dessler, broke in during the middle of the meeting and led Wittenberg away. But then something happened that Gens had not foreseen. The FPO staff had made it a practice whenever it met with Gens to post its own guards outside the meeting place, and when the FPO guards saw Wittenberg being led out in handcuffs by the Lithuanians they went into action, and within half an hour Wittenberg was free.

Gens countered by proclaiming an emergency. His whole authority was now at stake. It was two in the morning, and a large and excited crowd had gathered in the square before the building of the Jewish council. Gens spoke to them from the balcony: "The Gestapo demands one Communist from us, otherwise the whole ghetto

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will be destroyed. Shall all Vilna Jewry be wiped out for the sake of one man?" The crowd responded with hysterical cries of "Hand over Wittenberg! Save the ghetto!" Why, they felt, should they sacrifice themselves for Wittenberg—least of all at that moment, when a new Russian offensive was being expected any day and the liberation of Vilna with it?

As chief of the highly conspiratorial FPO, Wittenberg was still unknown to the mass of people in the ghetto. But his fellow FPO members respected him greatly, whatever their party allegiance, as a born leader and a responsible man who never lost his head. Armed FPO members, ready to shoot, now stood guard around the house where he had taken refuge. Gens mobilized the riffraff of the ghetto, and they were soon gathered in a mob around Wittenberg's house calling for his surrender and threatening to go in and take him by force. Meanwhile Gens and Dessler went from courtyard to courtyard haranguing the people: "The Gestapo has given us an ultimatum expiring at six in the morning. Then they'll annihilate us with planes and tanks. Who'll protect us then? Those schoolboys with their toy guns?"

The young FPO men who stood ready with their guns were undergoing an agonizing conflict. "Jews look on us as though we were their murderers. We collected guns together in hope of fighting the Germans, but now—who are we supposed to fight? *Jews?*" Finally Gens sent emissaries to the headquarters of the FPO; the latter refused to negotiate with him at first, but finally consented. Gens's argument ran: "You yourselves are to blame for this situation because of your carelessness. Resistance to the Germans is impossible at this moment. You'll be beaten. It's better to lose one man than to lose everything. You'll gain time. When the right moment comes you'll be able to break out and get to the forest." Wittenberg sat calm and relaxed, in complete possession of himself, and listened silently to the heated debate of his fellow-leaders in the FPO. They were unable to reach a decision. Meanwhile the yells of the crowd came through the windows of the attic in which they were gathered: "We want to live! To live!"

Finally Wittenberg spoke: "Listen. I'm going to leave the whole thing up to my party." Acting upon this wish, the leadership of the Communist party in the Vilna ghetto decided that he should give himself up to the Gestapo, and some of Wittenberg's own party comrades (among them Sonia Madeysker) were sent into the room in which he was sitting to inform him of their decision. At first he could not understand. "Are you serious, Sonia?" he said. "Are you sure you're not wrong?" When they had at last convinced him that there was no other way out, he is reported to have said abruptly: "No movement ever handed its leader over to the enemy. A movement that does that is bankrupt." According to a different report, all he said was: "If you wish it I will go." At any rate he surrendered himself, accompanied, as a gesture, by Jewish policemen. Some claim he was tortured to death by the Gestapo; others say that he was able to swallow cyanide poison before he could be questioned. A song by Shmerke Kaczerginski telling of how Wittenberg went to his death soon became a popular Yiddish folk song.

Wittenberg's surrender to the Gestapo was Gens's last victory.

AKTION swiftly followed *Aktion:* one on July 1, another on August 6, and a third from August 19 to 24. Between the 20th and 23rd of August the remaining ghettos in the towns around Vilna were cleared. From the 1st of September to the 5th, a great deportation of Jews to Estonia took place. Rumors were spread beforehand that there really were labor camps there; postmarked letters came back to Vilna from one camp called Vayvari, which indomitable Jewish wit at once baptized "Camp Veh-Veh" (or "Woe, Woe"). The Jews of the Vilna ghetto were promised work and life, but they no longer trusted in promises. Yet the train stood waiting. Gens, beside himself and drunk, ran around literally beating people

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into the train with his stick. He shot one Jew down on the spot because he was slow in obeying. The Jewish policemen themselves, now carrying firearms given them by the Germans, went wild as they smelled blood. And thus the *Aktion* was carried out, 5,000 persons being taken away. To those who remained in the Vilna ghetto, Gens once again promised peace—the final peace.

But final peace was destined to come to himself first. The Gestapo had been watching him carefully for a long time. It had its own agents, thirteen of them, in the Jewish police. On September 14, 1943 he was ordered to report to Gestapo headquarters. A friend of his there, probably Martin Weiss, advised him to disobey and flee, for a death sentence hung over his head. But Gens answered, "If I, the head of the ghetto, run for my life, thousands of Jews will have to pay for it with theirs." He then summoned all his policemen, told them that he had been called to the Gestapo, and named a deputy to serve in his absence. The next day he went to the Gestapo office and did not return. On the same day a high Gestapo officer named Kittel held a roll call of the Jewish police, to whom he announced that Gens had been shot for disobeying the orders of the German police. An unofficial report that circulated in the ghetto said that Gens had been accused of maintaining contact with the FPO and helping the partisans.

That evening the Jewish police held a memorial service for their former chief at which the official ghetto rabbi spoke, beginning with the words: "We no longer have a father," and Gens's brother said *kaddish*. Shortly afterward, on Yom Kippur, all the synagogues in Vilna held memorial services for "Jacob Gens, the martyr." Two Jewish girls slipped out of the ghetto that day and went to Rossa, where they prayed at Gens's grave and laid a wreath of flowers on it. Whether these gestures expressed the real attitude of most of Vilna's surviving Jews is more than doubtful.

A few days later came the end of the ghetto, too, in an *Aktion* carried out on September 23, 1943. The report for October and November 1943 of the German general commissioner for Lithuania contains the following short and dry account: "In view of the urgent need of labor power in the shale-oil region of Estonia, and because of certain difficulties in the Vilna ghetto, the latter was completely evacuated."

NAZI persecution left the Jews who were its victims no room for normal behavior. The higher the individual's position and the greater his responsibility, the more enormous became the "agony of choice" to which he was exposed, and the lower he fell in making his choice. In the old Torah tradition, it was precisely those angels who had risen highest in the hierarchy of created beings who were cast down into the lowest depths. Merin and Gens were by no means angels, but by consenting to be lifted up by the servants of Hell they were turned into servants of Hell themselves. To what extent they themselves, as individuals, were responsible for what circumstances made of them is impossible to say, yet one feels that no loyal, self-respecting Jew would have done what they did.

At least we can see what the "role in history" of the Genses and the Merins really was. They permitted themselves to be used by the Nazis to lull the Jews with false hopes. Because of people like Merin and Gens, the Nazis were able to make their victims do much of the dirty work themselves. The Merins and the Genses worked to keep the Jews from realizing the desperate truth of their situation and joining together to do what could be done about it. A leading Polish politician has said: "The Germans used to boast that the annihilation of the ghettos had been achieved through the agency of the Jews themselves, and there was a measure of truth in this, so far as the ghettos in Poland were concerned."

The Polish politician in question cannot quite be considered a friend of Jews (though he happens to have a Jewish wife) and there is an unpleasant edge to his words. But the lesson in what he reports is one for Poles too—and for everybody.

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THE PEKING-MOSCOW AXIS

Who Is Top Dog?

G. F. HUDSON

ON DECEMBER 16, 1949, two and a half months after the inauguration in Peking of the "Central People's Government of the Chinese People's Republic," Mao Tse-tung arrived in Moscow. It was a great historic occasion when the new ruler of China, fresh from the conquest through civil war of the most populous country in the world, came to pay his respects to his elder brother in the Marxist-Leninist faith, the man who was the heir of the Russian October Revolution and the conqueror of Berlin. Mao had long talks with Stalin, toured the Soviet Union, and did not get back to China until the beginning of March of 1950. On Soviet soil he could feel proud of his own achievement and carry himself as a person of real importance; he did not have to behave with humility as if he were a leader of a Communist party which had never made a revolution. His relations to the master of the Kremlin were nevertheless those of a junior to a senior, of a pupil to a teacher. His regime was less than a dozen weeks old, but thirty-two years had passed since the Bolsheviks took power in Russia; the new China looked to Moscow for instruction and advice, for material economic aid and for military protection. Mao might or might not follow Soviet recommendations in making his own major policy decisions, but he was certainly not at this time disposed to tell Stalin how to conduct Soviet foreign policy or to explain to him the implications of Marxist-Leninist doctrine in the current world situation.

Just seven years after this visit of Mao Tse-tung to Stalin, a Chinese Communist leader again arrived in Moscow, not this time Mao himself but his Prime Minister Chou En-lai acting on instructions from Peking. Chou came to mediate between the Soviet Union and Poland after the revolts of the autumn of 1956 in Poland and Hungary had shaken to its foundations Moscow's authority in Eastern Europe and caused dismay and bewilderment in the ranks of Communism throughout the world. In Hungary, Communist rule had collapsed completely and had only been restored by Soviet tanks; in Poland, the party still held power, but under a leader who had been elevated in direct defiance of an attempt made by Khrushchev in person to prevent it, and there remained the strong possibility of a Soviet resort to force in order to crush the recalcitrant nationalism of the Poles. Both in Moscow and in Warsaw Chou En-lai played an important part in patching up a reconciliation between the Soviet and Polish leaders. It was the first Chinese intervention in the political affairs of Europe, something which could not have been imagined while Stalin was alive. But what was even more remarkable in this crisis of international Communism was the fact that the ideological pronouncements which seriously sought to analyze the causes of the recent upheavals and adapt Communist doctrine to the new situation were coming not from Moscow, but from Peking. While confusion appeared to reign in the Kremlin, the Chinese Communist party made declarations which, if far from profound, were at any rate marked by a certain clarity and com-

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prehensiveness of theoretical conception.

This increased prestige and influence of Communist China in relation to the Soviet Union has been to some extent a development which was inevitable with the consolidation of the new regime in China and the enhanced self-confidence of its leaders. But it also reflects the advantage possessed by Mao Tse-tung since the death of Stalin on account of his unchallenged personal ascendancy in China as compared with the prolonged dissensions and struggle for power in the Soviet Union—a source of uncertainty and confusion in Soviet policy which has left the authority of the Kremlin in the Communist world seriously impaired.

Mao Tse-tung is a figure comparable to Lenin in that he is the founder of the regime of which he is the head, the man who led his party to the conquest of power. He was not a successor to an authority already established; he was the creator of that authority. He holds today the position that Lenin would presumably have held had he still been alive nine years after the final victory over Wrangel. But in Russia there have been two demises of the supreme leadership, and each has been followed by a period of "collective leadership" marked by instability, dissension, and a struggle for power resulting in the emergence of a new personal autocracy. Whatever the theory of "democratic centralism" on paper, the Communist party-state requires in practice at its apex a single potentate who can be the final arbiter between cliques and factions within the party. Collective leadership simply does not work for more than a brief interval of time. On the other hand, the emergence of a new dictator evokes intense jealousy among those who were previously his equals in rank and a widespread fear of the ways in which he may use his power, particularly if party members have suffered excessively under the rule of the last boss. The contest for the succession can thus become extremely bitter with consequent dislocation and uncertainty in domestic and foreign policy. Such a critical period could in China follow the death of Mao Tse-tung, but so far the Chinese Communists have had the advantage of a decisive personal leadership, whereas the Soviet party from the spring of 1953 onwards had to cope with the problem of the succession to Stalin's vacant throne.

THERE is no evidence of any serious conflict in Sino-Soviet relations during the three and a half years between the founding of the Chinese People's Republic and the death of Stalin. On the contrary, this was a period of close Sino-Soviet cooperation. Mao Tse-tung's visit to Moscow resulted in the conclusion of a treaty of military alliance between the two Communist powers, and this was put to the test during the war in Korea; the outcome was such as to confirm Chinese Communist confidence in Russian capacity and will to provide protection in a major clash with the "imperialists." Russia not only supplied the Chinese forces in Korea with an abundance of equipment but also, even without directly intervening in the war, gave Communist China a degree of support sufficient to deter the United States and its allies operating under the United Nations command in Korea from attempting to enforce withdrawal of the "People's Volunteers" from the peninsula by action against industries and communications in Chinese territory. Mao Tse-tung was thus enabled to carry on a major war for nearly three years against a coalition of sixteen states including three great powers, to the great enhancement of the prestige of his regime, without a single shell or bomb falling on Chinese soil. The Russians also placed their potent international propaganda machine at the disposal of the Chinese Communists, particularly for the mendacious germ warfare campaign. On the Chinese side there was an enthusiastic willingness to learn from the "Soviet experience" and a great propaganda drive by the Sino-Soviet Friendship Association to glorify Russian (as against American) technology and culture. The material economic aid from the Soviet Union was meager, but numerous Russian technicians were sent to China and played an important part in starting new industries.

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After Stalin's death Communist China had no direct concern with the political jockeying for position among the "collective" leaders of the Soviet Union, but did have an interest in the stability of the Soviet regime and in the continuation of Stalin's policies of support for the government in Peking. This interest caused the Chinese Communists to favor Khrushchev rather than Malenkov in the conflict over the priority of heavy industry, for China was in need of capital goods from Russia and a large-scale switch of Soviet industry to the production of consumer goods would reduce the supplies needed for China's own industrialization. Moreover in October 1954, Khrushchev further established himself in Chinese good will by going to Peking and negotiating an agreement which restored Port Arthur and the Sino-Soviet joint-stock companies to Chinese ownership. Chinese Communist sentiment was now becoming resentful of any restrictions on national sovereignty and appreciated Khrushchev's willingness to abandon rights which even as vested in the Soviet Union had a flavor of imperialism. The determination to maintain full sovereignty in relations with Moscow also made the Chinese sympathetic to the aspirations of the European Communist satellites for greater independence, and they viewed with favor the moves made under Khrushchev's leadership to relax Soviet control in Eastern Europe, including the reconciliation with Yugoslavia. Mao Tse-tung, in spite of wishful Western predictions that he would himself become another Tito, had given unreserved support to the Moscow line as long as the Soviet Communist party kept up its feud with Tito, but when Khrushchev went to Belgrade and said that the whole affair had been a misunderstanding due to the machinations of the deceased Beria, Peking accepted the reversal of policy without demur.

In the field of domestic policy also China responded to the current trend in the Soviet Union, even though there were no directives which required conformity. Accustomed to look to Russia for the pattern of correct Communist behavior, the Chinese Communists could not be unaffected by the new climate of relative relaxation in Russia, particularly the "thaw" in literature and scientific work. The turn of the line came later in China than in Russia; 1955 was the year of the witch-hunting campaign against Hu Feng and his followers, but by the end of the year the intimidated and brain-washed intelligentsia was being assured that those who were not counter-revolutionaries had nothing to fear from the regime and would be protected against overzealous inquisitors.

Finally, early in 1957, Mao proclaimed the famous "Hundred Flowers" policy, which appeared to introduce a freedom of thought going considerably beyond anything yet permitted in Russia. After years of the most ruthless regimentation and crushing of dissent the Chinese Communists suddenly acquired the reputation of being in the vanguard of liberalization in the Communist world. This toleration was never what it seemed, but at least in form Communist China was going the same way as the Soviet Union.

A difference became manifest, however, when Khrushchev went on to launch the attack on the memory of Stalin which, although delivered at a closed session of the Soviet Communist party's 20th Congress, soon became known throughout the world. It is not proposed here to speculate on the problem of Khrushchev's motives for this extraordinary performance or to go into the question whether any advance warning of it was communicated to non-Soviet Communist parties. It is sufficient to state the fact that on February 15, 1956, just ten days before Khrushchev demolished the reputation of the dead Stalin with furious invective, Chu Teh, as Chinese fraternal delegate to the Congress, read out a message from Mao Tse-tung which spoke of "the invincibility of the Soviet Communist party created by Lenin and nurtured by Stalin and his closest comrades-in-arms." Such language on such an occasion was not used lightly; it signified that Mao was upholding the old con-

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ception of the "party of Lenin and Stalin." If he had not been informed of the impending demotion of Stalin, he was made to look foolish by what happened ten days later; if he had been informed, the phrasing was a protest against what was intended. In either case the policies of the Soviet and Chinese leaders had fallen apart.

In retrospect it is clear that Khrushchev's speech against Stalin was a colossal blunder. It may have been popular with the upper ranks of the Soviet Communist party which were only too well informed already about Stalin's atrocities and sought guarantees for themselves against their repetition. But elsewhere, throughout the world, its effect was to discredit the regime which now admitted to such a record, to vindicate its critics who were now proved to have been justly accusing it, and to bewilder and demoralize all those party zealots who for thirty years had seen Communism as incarnate in the figure of the Genial Secretary. Nowhere was the repudiation of Stalin more embarrassing than in China where such great efforts had been made to build up the prestige of the Soviet Union; the attack on the cult of personality was likewise deleterious to the organized adulation of Chairman Mao which fully rivaled Stalin-worship in its fulsome extravagance. The inevitable consequence of all this was a loss of confidence among the Chinese Communists in the wisdom and reliability of the Soviet leadership—doubts which were intensified when later in the year the increasing political confusion in Eastern Europe produced the major upheavals in Poland and Hungary. The Chinese now came to the conclusion that they must formulate a policy independently of Moscow for dealing with the new situation and take an active part in restoring the edifice of Communist power in Europe now threatened with collapse.

There is no doubt that Mao Tse-tung regarded the events taking place in Europe as seriously endangering the regime in China; he later declared in a speech that the news of the rising in Hungary had at once stimulated hopes of a similar overturn among anti-Communist Chinese. What was most alarming in the situation for Peking was the apparent incapacity of the Soviet government to give a clear lead to the Communist world in a crisis which was not only a local military problem but a challenge to the Marxist-Leninist faith. The Russian tanks were effective enough in breaking the armed resistance of the Hungarian people, but Moscow's ideological artillery seemed to be firing blindly while Yugoslavia denounced the initial Soviet intervention and Poland refused to recognize the Kadar government. The main reason for the Soviet political disarray was undoubtedly the dissension of cliques within the Soviet leadership. Khrushchev, having staked his reputation on his policy of conciliating Tito and relaxing controls over the satellites, had to put the blame for the disorders in Poland and in Hungary on the past errors of their veteran party chiefs Boleslaw Bierut and Matyas Rakosi, but a strong faction in the Kremlin attributed them to the policies of Khrushchev himself which had had the effect of weakening and discrediting the Communist parties of Poland and Hungary without allaying discontent.

With such a controversy raging in the Kremlin it was impossible for the Soviet Union to make clear and consistent pronouncements on the crisis. Khrushchev had not yet sufficient personal authority to silence his critics, and even if he had, his incapacity for any formulation of abstract ideas precluded him from composing the kind of declaration the emergency required. It was, therefore, left to the Chinese Communists to straighten out the tangle; in Peking there was a single leader supreme over factions, and one who, whatever practical tasks he had undertaken, had always been primarily an intellectual. The Peking *People's Daily* in an article which was stated to be based on discussions in the Politburo of the Chinese Communist party, and thus had the force of an official manifesto, reviewed the course of recent events in Eastern Europe and laid down principles for judging them. By stressing the need for ap-

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plication of Marxist-Leninist doctrine to national conditions, the Chinese pronouncement gave support to the aspirations of the satellite Communist parties for internal autonomy, but at the same time it dwelt on the need for maintaining the unity of the Communist camp on the basis of a common creed and drew a definite line between permissible claims to "different roads to socialism" and the heresy of revisionism.

This declaration—which was reproduced in full in *Pravda* the day after it was published in Peking—had a great influence throughout the Communist world and provided a formula for the subsequent diplomatic activities of Chou En-lai, who was sent to Moscow and Warsaw to mediate between the Soviet and Polish leaders. In Moscow, according to Polish reports, Chou dissuaded the Soviet authorities from an intention to use force against Gomulka; in Warsaw he did his best to get Gomulka to endorse the Soviet intervention in Hungary and accept Soviet "leadership" of the Communist camp. The Chinese insistence on this last point surprised the Poles, who had become accustomed to think of the Chinese Communists as their allies against Russia's pretensions to supremacy, and indeed it seemed strange that China should be thus bolstering up the Russian position at a time when Moscow had lost so much prestige as a result of recent events. But Chou argued that the Communist states must stand together in opposition to imperialism, that Russia's economic and military strength gave her a natural primacy in the bloc, and that recognition of such a primacy need not involve any surrender of sovereign rights by its other members.

The Chinese attitude was colored by the fear that Poland, under the impetus of popular anti-Russian feeling, would break away from the bloc altogether and move into a neutral position, like Tito's Yugoslavia. For Mao the right of Communist-governed nations to follow different roads to socialism did not extend to the right to be neutral in the struggle against imperialism, which was "the class war in the international field." For this reason the Chinese Communists were sharply critical of Tito, though they still hoped for his return to the fold of orthodoxy, and a prominent member of the Chinese party visited Belgrade at the same time Chou En-lai was in Warsaw and Budapest.

THIS Chinese initiative in European affairs, which had previously been the exclusive sphere of Soviet political action, profoundly altered the basis of relations between Peking and Moscow. Mao's China had become a power whose voice was heeded by all Communists and not only by its own citizens; its interests and ambitions henceforth had to be taken into account in the making of Soviet general policies and not only on specifically Far Eastern issues. Although the leadership in the Soviet Union has been more concentrated and unified since the purge of the Presidium in July of last year, this has not restored the former Soviet possession of an exclusive initiative in the common affairs of the Communist camp. During the current year the independent initiative of China has been manifest on two issues which were not of direct concern to Peking: the new campaign against Tito beginning in May and the Middle East crisis following the revolution in Iraq in July. In both cases the Chinese Communist influence was not a moderating but an exacerbating factor in the direction of Soviet policy.

The drive against Tito followed on the Yugoslav Communist Congress at Ljubljana in April when the main points of the Titoist heresy were defiantly reasserted. Moscow had already shown its displeasure by polemical press articles and by dissuading the Communist satellite parties from sending fraternal delegates to the congress. But the Soviet attitude was still mild and indecisive as compared with the uncompromising invective of an editorial in the *People's Daily* which appeared on May 5. This virtually restated the arguments of the Cominform resolution of 1948, which Khrushchev had in effect repudiated by his attempts to placate Tito since the spring of 1955. This Chinese attack set in motion a new campaign against

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Titoism throughout the Communist world, culminating in a denunciation of Tito by Khrushchev himself speaking in Sofia a month later, but even so the Soviet attitude continued to be less extreme than the Chinese. It has been suggested that the Kremlin put up the Chinese to lead the new attack on Tito because it was difficult for Khrushchev with his pro-Tito record to take the initiative in this matter. But the Chinese Communists' blast against the leader of a nation so far away from the frontiers of China was part and parcel of their own bitter persecution of "revisionism" which had been carried on since the end of the brief experiment with free speech in the spring of 1957.

By this time the tide was running strongly against revisionism all over the Communist world; the Moscow Declaration of the twelve ruling Communist parties, issued to mark the fortieth anniversary of the original Bolshevik Revolution, had denounced revisionism as now a more serious danger than dogmatism (equivalent to Stalinism) to the international Communist movement. But in China the pendulum was swinging more violently than elsewhere; all kinds of people were being accused of revisionism as the most deadly of sins, and Tito was attacked as a symbol of revisionism in the outer world. The evidence indicates that in their purgative zeal the Chinese Communists were pushing the Russians further than the latter wanted to go.

In the Middle East crisis of July, although the Soviet claim that the world was on the brink of war was artificially worked up in order to force the Western powers into an unprepared summit conference, the Soviet Union had at any rate solid ground for concern over events in a region so close to its Transcaucasian frontier. But China, with no frontier nearer than the Pamirs, went much further than Russia in provocative gestures against the United States and Britain; Peking threatened to send "volunteers" to fight together with the Arabs against the imperialists, and the Chinese press talked of American "paper tigers" whose bluff should be called by bold action. Then when Khrushchev showed himself willing to accept the Western counter-proposal for the requested summit conference to be held "within the framework" of the United Nations Security Council, it was presumably a Chinese protest which sent Khrushchev off on an unheralded visit to Peking and caused him afterwards to abandon the whole idea of a summit conference.

The most obvious ground for Chinese Communist objection was the presence of a delegate from Nationalist China at any meeting of the Security Council, but there is reason to believe that the original Soviet proposal for a summit conference of five powers including India had not met with Mao's approval either. It meant in effect that India would have been substituted for China as the representative Asian power in a Big Five discussion of Asian powers, and this was a precedent which could not be to China's advantage, however helpfully Nehru might have supported the Soviet line on Western intervention in the Middle East. The general direction of Peking policy during the Middle East crisis was thus to push the Soviet Union toward a more bellicose attitude than it was willing to adopt and to thwart whatever possibilities of high-level negotiation existed at that time.

THREE weeks after the visit of Khrushchev to Peking the Chinese Communists began the bombardment of Quemoy. During the month that followed the Soviet Union demonstrated its support for Mao's China, culminating in the abusive and threatening letter which President Eisenhower refused to receive. It was a notable fact, however, that the Soviet attitude did not become really tough until it had become evident that American forces would not intervene directly in the Quemoy fighting. Since Defense Minister Malinovsky accompanied Khrushchev to Peking, it must be assumed that the projected operations against Quemoy—the build-up began in July—were discussed, and the absence of any attempt to capture the island by assault suggests a Russian refusal to cover China against the possible consequences of

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such a commitment of forces. It was probably hoped to reduce Quemoy by blockade, but improved methods of supply by sea and Nationalist superiority in the air—due largely to the provision of American Sidewinder missiles to the Nationalists—frustrated this aim. The offensive against Quemoy was thus militarily a failure, but politically, by provoking a new strain on American-British relations, dissensions over policy within the United States, and tension between Washington and Taipei, it achieved a certain degree of success which was a gain for both Soviet and Chinese Communism.

Part of the motive for both the Chinese bellicosity over the Western interventions in Lebanon and Jordan and the offensive against Quemoy has certainly been to arouse Chinese patriotic and anti-imperialist sentiment in support of the regime at a time when the drive for "leaping progress" in industrialization and the establishment of the ultra-collectivist "people's communes" has been imposing unprecedented strains internally on the Chinese nation. The new line in social and economic policy represents a victory of the party zealots and extremists over the more moderate planners of the state bureaucracy and it necessitates a phase of acute tension comparable to that in Russia during the crucial period of economic transition between 1928 and 1933. Communist China may not want a major war during such a period, but it is unlikely either to want an international détente; the Chinese people must as far as possible be reconciled to their lot by being made to believe in an imminent imperialist threat. Whatever tendencies may recently have existed in the Communist camp toward a genuine reduction of tension in world affairs, the influence of Peking is likely for a long time to come to be adverse to them. The Chinese People's Republic today stands for Communism in its most extreme, rigorous, and uncompromising form, and the mantle of Stalin rests on the shoulders of Mao Tse-tung rather than of Khrushchev.

ROSES FOR MY GRANDMOTHER

LAURENCE JOSEPHS

The gardens of her mind where she most often lived
Amidst all useful fruits and grains,
Were fair pavilions raised beneath sweet glass:
Like breads, like cookies shaped to lily for a holiday.

She, planter, gardener to a palace—Solomon's perhaps—
Endowed such monuments as in me echoed strength:
My hunger satisfied, my eyes in brimming million leaves
With spring through all the year my single childhood season.
But useful, useful: that one blade
Of grass, that only leaf, that carven apple never went astray.
Always and by magic turned to worshipful design.
Such tribute made one child a prince; made me that prince.

Thus at the finish when a winter grew
Like death into the orchards of her time,
I brought her useless roses of a luxury
She never understood but lay in reckless awe.

We wept for love of beauty, she and I,
And in her thanks there was no bread or food.
A perfume filled the kitchens of her soul
Where even thorns were beautiful to her.

Laurence Josephs, a native and resident of New York City, has published verse and criticism in other periodicals, including the *New Yorker* and *Poetry*, but appears here for the first time.

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FIVE MILLION AMERICAN JEWS

Progress in Demography

ERICH ROSENTHAL

DURING the past decade our knowledge of the demographic structure of the Jewish population in America has considerably expanded. First, and most important of all, we now know as a fact that there are at the present time five million Jews in the United States. Of almost equal importance is our knowledge that the surveys conducted in the past twenty years gave a highly accurate picture of the demographic situation.

These surveys were sponsored by private local and national communal agencies, and carried out by a small group of demographers who had developed rather ingenious techniques for obtaining the desired information in a most economical manner. It is only in the past decade that increasing use has been made of modern sampling techniques. The five million figure for the Jewish population—4,975,000, to be precise—is the result of a sample survey of the total U.S. population which was undertaken by the U.S. Bureau of the Census. The same survey found that there were about 110 million Protestants and some 43 million Roman Catholics in the civilian population of the United States as of March 1957.

The publication of this information by the U.S. Bureau of the Census is a truly remarkable event. This is the first time that such a survey has been undertaken by a governmental agency. Although it was the Census Bureau's first try, and although the answers were obtained on a *voluntary* basis, 99 per cent of the respondents cooperated fully. It was also the first time that the Census Bureau asked respondents directly, "What is your religion?" and ascertained the information in as straightforward a manner as it usually does in the matter of age, sex, marital status, and a host of similar personal and social characteristics. Previously—in the 19th century, and in the decennial *Census of Religious Bodies* of 1906, 1916, 1926, and 1936—the Bureau, with the help of special agents, had gathered from religious organizations data on church and synagogue membership, value of church property, indebtedness (mortgages), expenditures for salaries, and size of Sunday school classes. This information was obtained through contact with the officers of local and national religious organizations, and did not involve any personal contact between the population and representatives of the Census Bureau.

At first sight the question, "What is your religion?" appears to be the most obvious means of obtaining information on the subject. However, in the introductory remarks of the Census release we read that "the question did not relate to church membership, attendance at church services or gatherings, or religious belief." While the questionnaire undoubtedly tapped these three major sources of religious affiliation, "many persons," in the words of the Census Bureau, "in addition to those who maintain formal affiliation with a religious organization, associated themselves with such a group and reported its name." In other words, the question elicited a fourth dimension, namely, religious and cultural, or religio-cultural,

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background. Since the Bureau did not ask certain questions concerning the various dimensions of religious behavior, the statement quoted above is merely an inference, a justifiable inference based on available church membership statistics and on the fact that 96 per cent of the survey sample indicated an identification with a religious group. Yet the specific nature of the identification is not spelled out. In the case of the Jewish population, this can mean identification with religion, nationality, culture, or ancestry and family background. In other words, the question, "Who is a Jew?" gets into the way of such a seemingly simple task as counting the Jewish population of the United States.

A fairly valid answer to this question is that a Jew is a person who considers himself to be one, and is treated by others as if he were one. While self-identification does not always coincide with identification by others, it seems (at any rate to this writer) that in cases where there is such a discrepancy, self-identification should be given greater weight. Since the Census Bureau's question was aimed at eliciting the respondents' own view, the validity of the response cannot be questioned.

It may bear repeating that the figure of 4,975,000 for the Jewish population is the result of a *sample* survey. The question naturally arises whether and to what extent the results of sampling in general (and of this survey in particular) can be accepted as accurate. Sampling is a procedure in which from the examination of parts of a whole inferences are drawn about the whole. Considerable progress has been made in this field in the past twenty years under the aegis of the Census Bureau. This agency has been a pioneer in developing sampling methods and has piled up more experience than any other governmental or private body in the United States, with the result that surveys based on sample design have become a matter of everyday routine with the Bureau, as well as a great many other research organizations. The sample survey of religious affiliation was part of the Bureau's monthly sample survey. This "Current Population Survey"—as it is officially known—goes back to 1942, has been under constant critical observation and revision, and probably owes its meticulousness to the fact that it is primarily devoted to the collection of data on employment and other important aspects of the labor force—data which can also be used as political weapons. In the end, the accuracy of any survey—whether complete census or sample survey—depends on the interviewer's integrity and his ability to collect the desired data. Hence, the results of a well-conducted sample survey may be more accurate than those of a complete census, since in the first instance it is feasible to pay the price necessary to collect a smaller volume of data with a higher degree of accuracy and to cut down the number of refusals. According to the Census Bureau, refusals to cooperate have averaged only a fraction of one per cent since the inception of the monthly surveys, even though they are conducted on a voluntary basis.

According to the Census Bureau then, the Jewish population in the United States numbered 4,975,000 in March 1957. The question now arises whether this is a plausible figure and how it compares with what we believed the size of the Jewish community to be before this new figure became available. It may come as a surprise to find that the 1956 issue of the *American Jewish Year Book* (published by the American Jewish Committee) contains a table giving figures for the various states for 1955, but not for the United States as a whole. The omission was intentional, and was meant to emphasize the fact that figures for the states are estimates. It was apparently thought reckless to derive a total from such data. Yet, if one summons up courage and adds the figures up, one obtains a grand total of—lo and behold—4,974,050.

The fact that the Census Bureau figure for the spring of 1957 is within 1,000 of the summer 1955 figure of the *American Jewish Year Book* is not due to chance or luck. Since the middle 30's, Jewish local communities had begun to ascertain the

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number of Jewish residents with the help of complete censuses and sample surveys, and also by so-called indirect methods which involve the statistical manipulation of Yom Kippur absence data from public schools, communal death certificates, and city directories and voters lists.* Since these local surveys employed as generous a definition of the term Jewish as did the Census Bureau, the results—for that reason at least—should not be too far apart. It is also significant that the *Year Book* estimate moved so closely to the sample survey figure only after a local sample study of New York City, and a death certificate survey of Chicago, had resulted in a downward revision of the Jewish populations there. Since over 45 per cent of the total Jewish population lives in these two urban areas (within the city limits) a change there must affect the estimate for the total Jewish population in a significant manner.

The Jewish population now constitutes three per cent of the total population of the United States. However, as everyone knows, it is not evenly distributed throughout the country. Rather, Jews are heavily concentrated in the northeastern region of the United States. According to the 1957 sample survey, 69.1 per cent of the Jewish population live in the Middle Atlantic states (New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania) and in New England from Connecticut to Maine. The North Central Region (better known as the Middle West) and the West each have about 11 per cent of the total while the remaining 7.7 per cent reside in the South. As will be seen from Table 1, the total white population is much more evenly distributed with the exception of the West where only 15 per cent of the total white population resides.

Table 1

REGION OF RESIDENCE OF THE TOTAL WHITE AND THE JEWISH POPULATION MARCH 1957†

Region	White	Jewish
United States	100.0	100.0
Northeast	27.3	69.1
North Central	30.1	11.9
South	27.9	7.7
West	14.7	11.3

How does the regional distribution given by the Census Bureau compare with that obtained from the *American Jewish Year Book* data? As in the case of the total figure, the *Year Book* data are not far off: they deviate 2.5 per cent or less. They can thus be used to pinpoint the regional distribution of the Jewish population more exactly. This has been done in Table 2, from which it may be seen that the Jewish population is concentrated in three major areas. The most important cluster is the Atlantic Seaboard from Florida to Maine, where three-fourths of the Jewish community reside. The two minor clusters are California and the Great Lakes Region (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin). All other areas together contain the remainder (6.2 per cent) of the Jewish population of close on five million.

Table 2

REGION OF RESIDENCE OF THE JEWISH POPULATION, SUMMER 1955**

Region	Number	Per cent
United States	4,975,000	100.0
Atlantic Seaboard	3,660,750	73.6
New England	334,250	
Middle Atlantic	3,035,500	
South Atlantic	291,000	
West Coast	430,500	8.6
California	430,500	
Great Lakes	576,750	11.6
Ohio	153,000	
Indiana	22,000	
Illinois	280,000	
Michigan	83,750	
Wisconsin	38,000	
All other areas	307,000	6.2

Again, it would be a mistake to suppose that the Jewish community is evenly distributed within these regions of concentra-

*For a detailed description of these various techniques, their advantages and shortcomings, see E. Rosenthal, "The Jewish Population of Chicago, Illinois," in *The Chicago Pinkas*, ed. by S. Rawidowicz, Chicago: College of Jewish Studies, 1952.

†Source: Current Population Reports Series P-20, No. 79, Table 2.

**Source: *American Jewish Year Book*, 1956, Vol. 57, p. 124.

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tion. Rather, it is heavily concentrated in the larger urban areas. This finding of the sample survey must be considered its most important result; since other social characteristics, such as occupation, income, and fertility patterns, are directly determined by the fact that the American Jews are an urban people. The sample survey found (Table 3) that the Jewish population is so heavily concentrated in the larger urban areas that 87.4 per cent live in "urbanized areas" containing 250,000 residents or more. By contrast only about one-third of the total population, one-fourth of the white Protestants, and one-half of the Roman Catholics are found there. An "urbanized area"—according to the Census Bureau's definition—is a central city of 50,000 or more inhabitants together with its suburban fringe. It may sound strange, but by using "urbanized areas of 250,000 or more" the Census Bureau still understates the degree of urbanization of the Jewish population. For, according to the *American Jewish Year Book*, approximately 70 per cent of the total Jewish population reside in the 13 largest cities of the country, i.e. those having more than 600,000 inhabitants. New York City of course contains the largest aggregation. According to a recent private sample survey undertaken by HIP (Health Insurance Plan) about two million Jews reside within the five boroughs of the city. In other words, about 40 per cent of the total Jewish population of the United States are concentrated in the largest city of the country. This means that any description of the total Jewish population will be heavily influenced by the social characteristics found in the Jewish population of New York City.

Table 3

URBAN-RURAL RESIDENCE OF PERSONS 14 YEARS OLD AND OVER, BY RELIGION REPORTED, FOR THE UNITED STATES: MARCH 1957

Per cent by residence	United States	Urban			Rural nonfarm	Rural farm
		Total	Urbanized areas of 250,000 or more	Other Urban		
Total, 14 years old & over	100.0	63.9	36.6	27.3	24.4	11.7
White Protestant	100.0	55.2	24.5	30.7	30.1	14.7
Roman Catholic	100.0	78.8	53.9	24.9	15.8	5.4
Jewish	100.0	96.1	87.4	8.7	3.6	0.2

Low fertility is beyond doubt the most outstanding trait of urban life. It also has the most far-reaching social consequences. Since the urban population fails to reproduce itself, most cities have set into motion large internal migrations from rural areas, supplemented in the United States by immigration from abroad. These migrations also furnish the power to keep the escalators of social mobility in continuous motion, upward as well as downward. The specific pattern of fertility depends on the size of the city: *the larger the city, the lower the rate of reproduction.* This crucial fact was last observed in the analysis of the 1950 population census. Since 70 per cent of the Jewish population are located in the thirteen largest cities of the country, their fertility pattern can be expected to be low, and similar to that of the white population in these cities.

While urban residence is the major factor which influences fertility, occupation and income also co-determine the fertility pattern. According to a 1952 Census study, the wives of clerical workers, sales staff, and kindred employees had the lowest fertility, followed in ascending order by the professions and the group of managers, officials, and proprietors exclusive of farm operations. Industrial labor had a higher fertility, while the highest rate was achieved by farm labor, farm managers, and farm owners. The same

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study also revealed that up to a figure of $5,000 there was an inverse relationship between income and fertility. Now all the private surveys made of the Jewish population since the 30's point to a crucial fact, namely, that Jews are mostly concentrated in the clerical and sales field; then comes the function of managers, officials, and proprietors, and finally the professional personnel, a concentration precisely in those occupational fields where the fertility rate is lowest.*

On the basis of the foregoing considerations the assumption is justified that the Jewish population has the lowest level of fertility within the white large-city population. Since fertility is directly reflected in the age composition, the validity of this assumption can be tested by analyzing the age distribution as revealed in the Census Bureau's Sample Survey of March 1957. A study of Table 4 shows that the urban way of life of the Jewish population is fully reflected in its age distribution. The Jewish community has a smaller proportion of young people than the white Protestant or the Roman Catholic population. Nearly 53 per cent of all Jews are found to be 35 years and older, as compared with 45 per cent of the Protestant and 42 per cent of the Catholic population. The figures for the child population under fourteen years of age indicate that Jews did not participate in the war and postwar baby boom as much as did the other groups. However, before entering upon more detailed comparisons of the age composition we should remember that we are comparing the most highly urbanized religious group with groups whose degree of urbanization is considerably smaller. If it were at all possible to rearrange the data in such a manner as to compare the three religious groups for high, medium, and low levels of urbanization separately, the differences between the Jewish population and the other groups might be reduced to a considerable extent. While this particular type of comparison is not possible at the present time, we are in the fortunate situation of being able to compare the age composition of the Jewish population with that of the total white population of New York City. Since the New York data were collected just one month after the sample survey was taken, the comparison of the age distributions should have a high degree of validity. Figures for the white population of New York City will be found in the last column of Table 4. It will be seen that the age composition of the Jewish population throughout the United States is nearly identical with that of the age composition of the white population of New York City. Although 60 per cent of the total Jew-

Table 4

AGE COMPOSITION OF THE WHITE POPULATION, BY RELIGION REPORTED, FOR THE UNITED STATES, AND OF THE WHITE POPULATION OF NEW YORK CITY, 1957

Age	Protestant	Roman Catholic	Jewish	New York City
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 14	26.7	27.7	22.2	21.1
14-19	8.4	8.7	7.0	7.3
20-24	5.7	6.3	4.7	6.1
25-34	13.8	15.4	13.3	14.2
35-44	13.8	15.1	14.6	15.0
45-64	21.6	19.5	28.0	26.5
65 & over	10.0	7.2	10.1	9.8

*While the Jewish population of New York City is not quite as heavily concentrated in white collar occupations as is the Jewish group in other cities, a recent study of a sample of Brooklyn Jewish families revealed that the average size of the manual workers' families (2.32) was virtually identical with that of the white collar workers (2.28). In other words, the low fertility of the white collar workers is not compensated for by a larger fertility of the manual workers in the Jewish group.

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ish population resides outside of New York City, the age distribution of this group is of such a nature as though all of them were residing in New York and had adopted the New York City style of life. In other words, the Jewish population of the country is as urbanized as the total Jewish as well as non-Jewish population of New York City.

The analysis of age distribution discloses that the Jewish population—in the manner of large-city-folk—shows a very low fertility rate. While the white Protestant and the Roman Catholic groups can make up for their urban deficiencies from their rural surpluses the Jews do not have this opportunity; 9,000 Jews in rural farm areas, no matter what their fecundity, cannot begin to make up for the lack of natural increase in the city. But there is another way of securing the growth of a population: namely, through immigration from abroad.

Since the Federal government began to count Jewish immigrants in 1900 under the classification of "Hebrew race" (a practice discontinued in 1943) we are in a fairly good position to show just how much immigration has contributed to the growth of the Jewish population in the United States. Between 1900 and 1954 the total number of all immigrants to America amounted to twenty-one and a half million people, and of these, 2,200,000, or just about 10 per cent, were Jewish.

For reasons that are fairly obvious, these five and a half decades have been divided into five periods. Table 5 shows that about 80 per cent of all immigrants entered during the first quarter of the century whereas only 20 per cent of the total were admitted after 1925. The lowest ebb of Jewish immigration occurred between 1925 and 1932, that of the total population in the decade following. The rise of Hitler raised the proportion of Jewish immigrants to a third of all immigrants. Yet in spite of this relative rise, the average annual number of Jewish entrants was very small, reaching just above 15,000 during this critical phase of Jewish existence. Since 1943, the proportion has dropped to less than 10 per cent of all immigrants. The 150,000 Jewish immigrants who entered this country between 1944 and the end of 1954 constitute about 3 per cent of the total Jewish population. By now the reservoir of potential Jewish immigration from overseas has been almost exhausted, but as recent events have shown, it has not completely dried up. In the year following the Hungarian revolution of October 1956, nearly 4,900 Jewish refugees from Hungary were admitted to the United States. However, when at about the same time 20,000 Egyptian Jews were made homeless, the existing quota restriction made it virtually impossible to admit any to the United States.**

Table 5
TOTAL AND JEWISH IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES
1900-1954

Period	Fiscal year†	Immigrants to the U.S.A.*				Average annual number of Jewish Immigrants
		All		Jewish		
		Number	%	Number	%	
I	1900-1914	13,377,089	62.2	1,448,226	65.9	96,548
II	1915-1924	3,947,279	18.4	352,234	16.0	35,223
III	1925-1932	1,895,325	8.8	76,133	3.5	9,517
IV	1933-1943	499,998	2.3	168,128	7.6	15,284
V	1944-1954	1,780,605	8.3	151,859	6.9	13,805
	1900-1954	21,500,296	100.0	2,196,580	100.0	39,938

*The data for the years 1900-1943 are from "Jewish Migrations During the Last Hundred Years," by L. Hersch, *The Jewish People Past and Present*, vol. 1, p. 409; the data for the Jewish immigration 1944-1954 are from Henry Cohen, *Jewish Population Trends in New York City, 1940-1970*, p. 2. New York: Federation of Jewish Philanthropies, January 1956.

†From July 1 of the preceding year to June 30 of the year stated.

**According to the *American Jewish Year Book, Vol. 59* (1958), HIAS was able to help only 24 persons from Egypt enter the U.S.

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THE size of the Jewish population is further influenced by the occurrence of mixed marriages, and by conversions from and to Judaism. In order to collect and analyze statistical data concerning intermarriage the following terminology has been adopted: the term *intermarriage* refers to a marriage across religious lines. The term *mixed marriage* refers to a particular case of intermarriage. If each partner to the marriage retains his earlier religious identification, the family is termed a *mixed family*. It should be clear that with this set of definitions it is not possible to distinguish those cases in which one of the partners changed his religion to conform to that of the spouse. Within this framework of definitions the Census Bureau's Sample Survey found a *mixed family* ratio of 7.2 per cent in the Jewish population of the country. In other words, for couples in which one spouse was reported as Jewish, 7.2 per cent of the husbands or wives were reported as Protestant or Roman Catholic. The Bureau in its introductory comments to the release points out that "the enumerators were instructed not to assume that all members of a family have the same religion, but it is possible that this instruction may have been overlooked in some cases."

From this remark it appears that the Bureau considers this set of data minimum figures. This writer knows of only three studies —undertaken under private auspices—which contain data on the extent of intermarriage. The findings of two of them confirm the census results. Samuel Koenig, in a study of Stamford, Conn., in 1938, found the percentage of intermarried couples to be 7.2 per cent. Alvin Chenkin, in his study of New Orleans in 1953, found that 7 per cent of all Jewish families were intermarried. However, a recent study of *The Jewish Population of Greater Washington (D.C.) in 1956* (sponsored by the Jewish Community Council of Greater Washington and directed by Stanley K. Bigman) found that 11.4 per cent of all Jewish families had a non-Jewish spouse. Among several possible reasons which could be advanced to explain the larger share of mixed families in and around the District of Columbia, Bigman had reason to believe that the sampling method was responsible for the discovery of a larger share of mixed families. In view of the fact that the sample survey of the Census revealed a lower percentage, the reason for the higher rate must be sought elsewhere. Bigman—like previous students—found that more Jewish men than women are involved in mixed families. So are persons with considerable formal education, professional status, and native-born persons of native parentage. An analysis of the spatial distribution of these mixed families showed that they are anything but evenly distributed over Greater Washington. Their preferred area of settlement are the Virginia suburbs, which in another part of the survey are identified as having the highest proportion of Jewish in-migrants from small towns. It is the factor of small-town background rather than the sampling technique which will most likely explain the higher rate of intermarriage in Washington, D.C.*

This finding of small-town background and voluntary residential segregation must be linked with what is perhaps the most interesting finding of the Washington Survey: for many persons the involvement in a mixed family is not a new experience. One-fifth of the intermarried were themselves products of a mixed family, as compared to less than one per cent in all-Jewish households. Many persons so involved had siblings and other relatives who were also partners to mixed families. For half of the Jewish men married to non-Jewish wives, however, this was the first experience. This set of facts leads to some interesting sociological speculations: Under the influence of the concepts of "assimilation" and "amalgamation" we generally assume that a Jewish person who marries outside the group leaves it to disappear in the non-Jewish population or in the all-

*A correlation between small-town background and high propensity for intermarriage was first suggested by Hershel Shanks in his article, "Jewish-Gentile Intermarriage: Facts and Trends," COMMENTARY, October 1953.

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American environment. The Washington data, however, seem to suggest that the Jewish group is a core around which mixed families and persons of mixed parentage orbit. The course that these people take sometimes increases and at other times narrows their distance from the nucleus of the purely Jewish group. In the long run, however, it seems that a good portion of the children of mixed families will escape their marginal status and will be incorporated in the majority groups. The Washington data show that in 66 per cent of the families the children are not being reared as Jews, while in 25 per cent of the families they are so brought up. In nearly 9 per cent of the families at least one child is reared as a Jew, while another is brought up as a Gentile. At the present time there is no way of telling whether "being reared as a Jew" means anything more than being conscious of having a Jewish background.*

Intermarriage, then, it would appear from the Washington data, will in the long run contribute to a decline in the size of the Jewish population. However, this loss may be partially compensated for by conversions *to* Judaism at the occasion of a Gentile's marriage to a Jewish spouse. In 1953, Rabbi David M. Eichhorn undertook a survey to determine the number of converts to Judaism. He found that between 1948 and 1953, the Reform and Conservative rabbis were annually converting between 1,500 and 1,750 persons to Judaism. (There are no data available on the number converted by Orthodox rabbis.) Over 80 per cent of the converts were women. It is estimated that more than 60 per cent of the proselytes have joined a Reform or a Conservative congregation. It is also estimated that at least 80 per cent of the proselytes raise their children as Jews. Since we have dealt in some detail with the phenomenon of mixed marriage in Washington, D.C., it may be of interest to point out that the Washington Hebrew Congregation in Washington, D.C., reported the second largest number of proselyte members: 112; it is followed by Beth Ahaba in Richmond, Va., which has 80 such members. The Washington Hebrew Congregation is, however, outnumbered by B'nai Israel of Little Rock, Ark., which reported 189 such members. Recent over-all figures concerning the number of Jewish converts to Christianity seem to be unavailable.†

BIRTHS and deaths, migrations, mixed marriages and conversions, are the basic facts out of which the demography of a religious group must be constructed. What have we found? First of all, we are now in a position to assert that, as of March 1957, the Jewish population was just below the five million mark and the proportion of intermarried families 7.2 per cent of all Jewish families. Even though nearly identical figures had been available before, they had to be labeled as best estimates or informed guesses. The private survey of the Jewish population of the District of Columbia revealed that—to judge by the religious training of children in mixed families—the current loss from such unions is about 5 per cent per generation. This attrition is counterbalanced by the conversion of non-Jewish persons to Judaism, mainly on the occasion of their marriage to a Jewish partner. In recent years this influx amounted to an estimated minimum of 1,500 persons annually. Since we do not know the total number of such conversions, nor the number of Jews who are baptized, we cannot determine the net loss or gain.

We have also seen that the Jewish population of the United States did not participate in the war and postwar baby boom to the same extent as did the Protestant and

*The Washington data should be analyzed in greater detail and depth if the ways and means can be found. Unfortunately, Jewish social research has no fund appeal and barely manages to keep alive.

†A recent communication (June 1958) from the Reverend L. W. Halvorson, Area Secretary of the National Lutheran Council informed me that as of March 1958, 86 affiliated Lutheran congregations in New York reported a Jewish membership of 258 adults and 17 children, and that in the last 5 years 146 persons were converted. In Philadelphia, 33 congregations reported a membership of 81 Jewish persons and the number of conversions in the last five years as 53.

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Roman Catholic population. The heavy degree of urbanization, the heavy concentration of the Jewish population in the most urbanized area of the country, together with its rather one-sided occupational distribution, are factors which do not favor population growth.

Meanwhile the contribution of migration from abroad to the growth of the Jewish population in the United States has become successively smaller as the 20th century progressed. From an annual average of about 100,000 at the turn of the century the number of immigrants has declined to about 14,000. At the present time the future role of Jewish immigration is not certain, but it is unlikely that the current level of immigration will be substantially exceeded.

The demographic picture cannot be considered complete until the community's future size—its probable growth or decline—has been discussed. This must wait until such time as we can obtain a set of data from which to construct death rates for the total Jewish population of the country. (Because of the high mobility, particularly of the older age groups, any local area rate is subject to considerable error.) If the death rate should be lower than that of the white Protestant and Roman Catholic population—as was found to be the case in the 30's—the Jewish population is probably maintaining its size, although Jewish births have lagged behind. In the absence of such information we have to rely on what the data on the current age distribution tell us: they indicate a slow-down in the natural growth of the Jewish population which, if continued for another generation, could give cause for concern about the future.

THE PATRIARCH

SARAH SINGER

They pay him court, the weekly clan,
Solemn with Sunday thought and deed,
The filial and duteous breed
Grown alien, an immeasured span
Between them and his need.

Asunder now, they would rephrase
Their lost affinities, the blurred
And ancient ties with gift and word.
The old man nods, his earthless gaze
Ancestral and unstirred.

Abstracted, spelled beyond their reach,
Beyond solicitude or sting,
He hears finality as fling
And rasp of leaf portend for each
The climate of unbeing.

Sarah Singer was born in New York City in 1920. This is her first contribution to Commentary.

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ALGERIA AFTER THE REFERENDUM

Prospects for Peace

MAURICE CARR

ALGIERS

HOW much longer can the civil war go on, and how will it end?

This is an indelicate question to ask in Algeria. Everybody is haunted by it, but nobody likes hearing it. To the French soldier it sounds like a reproach: why hasn't he yet quelled the revolt which, on the 1st of November, entered its fifth year? In rebel ears it rings like an insinuation: is not the *fellagha* just about at the end of his tether?

Only the extremists in either camp are ready to answer it. "The struggle will continue until Algeria becomes independent," says the F.L.N. (National Liberation Front) zealot. The diehard European settler—the *ultra,* as he is called—says, "The trouble will be over as soon as Algeria is integrated with France once and for all."

The ordinary Algerian, Moslem, Christian, or Jew merely shrugs his shoulders, as if to say, "Who knows if there is any way out of the nightmare?" Although his hopes have risen in recent weeks, he does not indulge them, for he is afraid that he might yet be disappointed. And he is puzzled. He had grown accustomed to two rival sets of slogans—"Independence," "Free Algeria," on the one hand, and "Integration," *"Algérie française,"* on the other—which he thought he understood. They seemed to present the only possible alternative. And now de Gaulle has come along with a new watchword, "Fraternity," to reconcile the irreconcilables. A word like "fraternity" is all very well when it is uttered in a church, mosque, or synagogue, but is it practical politics anywhere in the world, and more especially in a country seething with hatred? De Gaulle's program for peace is not easy to grasp, for it is necessarily as complex as the Algerian problem itself. What is this problem?

Here is a multi-racial society whose members not only differ in physique, mentality, language, and religion, but whose various communities exist at different stages of civilization ranging all the way from the late Stone Age through a decadent medievalism to ultra-modernism. Between them there has always been tension, fear, envy, incomprehension, together, it is true, with some other things as well. Yet the communities coexisted quietly enough for more than a century under the old colonial system, which was not unduly harsh. Primarily for their own good, the European settlers introduced sanitation, fertilized the soil, built cities, villages, roads, dams, power stations, set up schools and a university, erected factories. Yet the native Moslems also benefited. Formerly they could scarcely produce enough offspring to make up for the losses suffered through epidemic and endemic disease as well as through incessant internecine warfare. With the improvement in hygienic conditions and the enforcement of law and order, the Moslem population grew from a bare 2,300,000—the first census was taken in 1856—to the present figure of over 9,000,000. In this number there are today some 1,300,000 Arabs, Berbers, Kabylians,

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and Mozabites who enjoy much the same living standards as the European *colons*.

Until the end of the First World War Algerian nationalism was virtually non-existent. There had never, down the ages, been an Algerian nation. The earliest known inhabitants of the western half of North Africa were the Berber tribes. Handsome and intelligent, the Berbers have not only an African tan on their white skin, but are steeped in African primitivism. Carthage rose and fell, the Roman legions came and went, and the Berbers relapsed into their old way of life, as if nothing had happened. Only the Arab invaders who arrived early in the 8th century stayed on, imposing the new faith of Mohammed at the sword's point, occupying the rich flatlands and pushing the Berbers into the inhospitable mountains. During the Middle Ages short-lived Berber kingdoms sprang up and vanished in the Magreb—the Sunset Land, as the Arabs call western North Africa—but the seat of government was always either in Morocco or Tunisia.

ALGERIA first became a separate entity when the Greek pirate Barbarossa, in the 16th century, seized this anarchic middle portion of the Magreb and made it into a province of the Ottoman Empire. Algiers, with its Casbah, or fortress, served as a stronghold for the Saracen corsairs who preyed on Mediterranean shipping and raided Southern Europe, bringing back shiploads of loot and captive "infidels" who fetched high prices on the slave market. The Casbah finally fell to the French in 1830. Even under French rule Algeria continued to be a sort of historical no-man's-land. Nominally a French province, rather more than half its 1,200,000 European settlers hail from Spain, Italy, and Greece.

Early in the 20th century, something strange and unexpected began to stir in Algeria. The Moslems, rousing themselves from their age-old slumbers, grew dissatisfied with their lot and aspired to something better: their dream was to become equals with the French, to be French—still Moslems, yet French. On the outbreak of the First World War they flocked to the colors; and they did so again in the Second World War, hoping that in return for their sacrifices they would at last be accepted as full-fledged Frenchmen.

They were repulsed, however, and their bitter disappointment was described to me by an educated Moslem ex-serviceman in this way: "Down the generations we Moslem Algerians passionately shared the joys and sorrows of France, and bled for her in two world wars. Don't imagine that our peasants—and most of our people are peasants—do not understand what is going on, even though they cannot read or write. We knew at what a cost victory was won in 1918. We knew that in the debacle of 1940 the people of France took to the roads as refugees. We knew what Pétain stood for. When France lay prostrate, we Moslems of Algeria volunteered to fight for the restoration of her honor. We were the backbone of the French landing force in Italy. We were proud to wear the French uniform. And when our men—who at home mostly lived on starvation wages—distributed toffees and cigarettes from our French helmets to the Italian children, we did so as Frenchmen. Are we not more French than the *colon* from Spain who, a week after setting foot on Algerian soil, is naturalized and regarded as a paragon of French patriotism, while we are looked down upon as inferiors, suspect aliens? But the *colons* would have no part of us."

The first Algerian nationalist movement was started in the inter-war years by a poor youth from Tlemcen, Messali Hadj, who had emigrated to Paris to hawk carpets around the café terraces at night, and who served his political apprenticeship with the Communist party. Although he has been a prisoner of the French for the past twenty years, his organization has kept going under a variety of names. At one time it was the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties. Today it is the M.N.A. (Algerian National Movement). In 1954, a dissident group broke away from the M.N.A. to form a rival body now known as the F.L.N. (Na-

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tional Liberation Front). The cleavage was an ideological one. The Messalist or M.N.A. doctrine is on the following lines: "We Moslems cannot be French: but we must be something; so we shall be independent Algerians. The *colons*, too, must become Algerians on the same footing as ourselves. We shall not reject them as they rejected us. In any case, we need them, we must have their technical know-how, and above all we cannot do without economic and cultural aid from France. If left suddenly to ourselves, not only shall we be unable to emancipate ourselves socially, but we shall be worse off than before. We shall suffer famine and chaos in our overpopulated and underdeveloped land, and slip back instead of progressing. If we press hard enough, France, which is intrinsically liberal, will ultimately see reason and make a satisfactory settlement with us."

The F.L.N. argument runs as follows: "We shall make our revolution, not with but against France. Our natural allies are our Arab brethren. Together with them we shall throw out all strangers from our midst, and form one united Arab nation from Morocco to Iraq, from the Atlantic to the Persian Gulf. Unfurling the banner of Islam and anti-colonialism, we shall then push on southwards through the African continent and spread out in Asia. Glory first, bread afterwards. A new golden age is dawning for the Arabs who once again, as in times bygone, will hold sway over a vast empire."

THE Algerian civil war, inspired and directed from Cairo, was launched under an initial misconception. The F.L.N. misjudged the temper of the Moslem population and thought that a few sparks of anti-French violence would suffice to kindle an insurrectionary blaze through the country. The Moslems, however, proved unresponsive, and after the first outbreak of terrorism on November 1, 1954, there was a ten-month lull. Then the F.L.N. staged a larger massacre of Europeans, but again the Moslems were not to be inflamed. The F.L.N. drew its conclusions, and set about mobilizing the Moslem masses by other means. Blackmail by murder was resorted to on a systematic basis. The penalty for non-collaboration with the *fellagha* bands, or for non-payment of taxes to the F.L.N. collectors, was death. Everywhere sundry Moslem men, women, and children had their throats slit or were otherwise done to death: their neighbors took the hint. New recruits to the guerrilla forces were ordered to assassinate someone near their home before going off into the mountains; having thus burned their bridges they were unlikely ever to become deserters. In several villages where M.N.A. influence was strong, the F.L.N. exterminated all the male inhabitants. In district after district the entire Moslem populace was ordered to commit sabotage; the Moslems who had thereby incriminated themselves with the French would willy-nilly come to identify themselves with the rebels. The F.L.N. killers in Algeria have so far slain seven times as many Moslem as European civilians—more than 10,000 of the former, 1,500 of the latter. In metropolitan France, the proportion has been even higher —1,717 Moslems to 75 French.

Yet it stands to reason that the F.L.N. could not have maintained itself all this time by intimidation alone. The call to *djihad*, holy war against the "infidels," goes straight to the Moslems' hearts, which throb at the promise that one day the Europeans will be driven into the sea and the underlings will inherit their masters' possessions. At the same time, these hearts are permeated with the old, ingrained veneration for the French. There is a minority of Moslems who doubtless loathe the French. But most are torn by ambivalent feelings, and finding themselves caught between two fires—the *fellaghas* and the French army—the Moslem masses are in the last resort ready to throw their lot in with the ultimate victors.

If in the early stages of the rebellion, Cairo overestimated its chances, Paris underestimated the danger. For more than a year the French government paid scant attention to what was euphemistically termed the "events" in Algeria. Had it taken strong counter-

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measures, in good time, the "events" would never have swelled into a full-scale revolt. The politicians, though, were too busy making and unmaking governments. They ignored the F.L.N. rebellion until their noses were rubbed in it, and then they failed to notice that a second revolt was brewing in Algeria—fomented by the *ultras* against French democracy. For some decades now, Algeria had to all intents and purposes been an autonomous state run by the *ultras* for the *ultras,* who, however, in return for subsidies from France condescended to put up a formal pretense that supreme authority was vested in Paris and in the French Governor-General. The *ultras'* low opinion of Paris declined even more when the French government simply overlooked the civil war. Finally it was moved to send in 300,000 troops after a mob of *colons* hurled insults and rotten tomatoes at Premier Guy Mollet when he came to Algiers to investigate the situation, February 6, 1956.

In the past the *ultras* had been quite content to lord it in Algeria, but now they felt they must go so far as to take over the helm of state in Paris itself. This was more compulsion than ambition: the *colons* genuinely, perhaps justifiably, feared that if France went on drifting Algeria would be lost. Their apocalyptic visions included seeing themselves slaughtered, or at the least expelled, by the Moslems. The humble folk who make up the main body of settlers, workers, petty officials, tradesmen—the upper crust of wealthy landowners and businessmen is no thicker than in France—love their Algerian homeland where they were born and where their forebears, up to five generations, are buried. They love the hot sun, the blue skies, the wild landscape which has entered into their own blood. No greater calamity could befall them than to be uprooted from their native soil.

A settlers' revolt could succeed only if it was supported by the army. The bulk of the army officers and men were metropolitan Frenchmen, new to Algeria. They too were disgusted with the Paris politicians. About a quarter of the rank and file were young Communists who, before embarking for Algeria, had engaged in mutinous protests against their participation in a "dirty colonialist war." But on their arrival they had been shocked by the F.L.N. atrocities, perpetrated more often than not against inoffensive Moslem civilians. They soon came to realize that it was out of the question for France to abandon the people of Algeria to the mercy of the rebels. Thus, by and large the French troops were convinced they were fighting a just cause, but were not being helped to fight it the right way by the government, which might leave them in the lurch at any moment.

Like the men, the officers were divided into two schools of thought. The activists wanted to hit out hard. "We have overwhelming strength," they said, "so why don't we use it? The Moslem population collaborate with the F.L.N. because the F.L.N. terrorize them. Well, let's terrorize them more than the F.L.N. can and they'll come over to our side."

The humanitarians said: "If we start emulating the F.L.N., we may as well pack up. We have to bring the Moslems round by convincing them that we are out to give them a square deal and not perpetuate the *colons'* privileges. Let's organize more labor camps for the unemployed who join the *fellaghas* out of sheer desperation. Let's build schools for the children. Let's try to deliver the womenfolk from their veiled bondage. Let's help civilize these unhappy folk."

As it turned out, Paris satisfied neither the activists nor the humanitarians. The government shuddered at the suggestion of holocausts of the innocent, yet it looked the other way when unnecessarily brutal repressions and Gestapo-like police methods were perpetrated in certain sectors. It issued specific orders to the military to win the Moslems over by kindness. In the way of direct, planned social welfare work, the army actually did more for the Moslems in the last two years than the *colons* had done in a century. But it was not carried far enough. And, most important of all, the government

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did not dare loosen the *ultras'* stranglehold on the civil administration in Algeria.

Meanwhile everybody in the army, bully or idealist, cook or colonel, was exasperated to tears by the sorry spectacle of the fall of one French government after another. This demonstration of political impotence was prolonging the bloodshed in Algeria and could lead to ultimate disaster. It encouraged the F.L.N. and the Moslems generally to believe that feckless France would sooner or later cut her losses in Algeria and shuffle out as she had done from Morocco, Tunisia, Indochina, Syria, and the Lebanon. There were ugly signs of dissidence among the settlers and in the army. There was the *ultras'* bazooka attempt on the life of General Salan, commander-in-chief of the Algerian forces, because he was no champion of "activist" holocausts. There was the bombing of the little Tunisian town of Sakiet, carried out by a local commander in the field without the consent or foreknowledge of the government. But Paris closed its eyes to the danger signals.

On May 13 last, the *ultras* were emboldened to strike a decisive blow. They stormed Government House in Algiers. Only a handful of senior officers, the "clique of colonels," were in the conspiracy. The rebels —now it was European rebels—had acted on the presumption that the disgruntled army would accept the *fait accompli* and join the *ultras* in their fateful endeavor to dictate the law to Paris. The gamble came off. General Salan, who was at first hissed by the mob, was willing after a little hesitation to dispatch an ultimatum to Paris. The gist of it was that parliament would at its peril elect to the premiership the progressive Catholic leader, Pierre Pflimlin, who was rumored to be in favor of negotiations with the Moslem rebels.

Parliament took the ultimatum coolly and proceeded to invest Pflimlin with the premiership. It cut communications with Algeria, and—now that it was too late—settled down to a trial of strength with the *ultras,* who had meanwhile gone into partnership with the army in the so-called Public Safety Committees governing Algeria.

At this point of the Algerian tragedy, miracles came to pass. In the army, the humanitarian element prevailed and obliged the *ultras* to endorse—or at least pay lip service to—an idea that had always been anathema to them: the integration of the Moslems, who were to be promoted to the status of full-fledged Frenchmen equal in every respect to the *colons.* There followed the fantastic scenes of Franco-Moslem fraternization which, after being initially stage-managed, became spontaneous and even hysterical. These demonstrations were an explosion of mingled fear and relief. The *colons,* obsessed with the fear of losing their homes, were willing now to pay, as it were, a higher rent: to accord equal rights to the Moslems. The Moslems, for their part, had expected a pogrom after the *ultras'* coup and were relieved to find themselves being warmly embraced instead. France tottered on the brink of civil war. The army, which had sent paratroopers into Corsica, was poised for a putsch against Paris. The *ultras* were for a military dictatorship in France. They hoped to become the wire-pullers behind some puppet ruler in general's uniform. The generals, already guilty of a grave breach of discipline, were reluctant to let themselves in for plain treason. They sought a compromise settlement which would keep up the appearances of Republican legality: they demanded the formation of a new government under de Gaulle. The *ultras,* ex-Pétainists to a man, dejectedly joined in the chorus of "We want de Gaulle!"

Parliament abdicated in favor of de Gaulle, and the former Resistance leader emerged from twelve years of self-imposed exile in the political wilderness. What his precise plans were no one knew. In France he was taken on trust. He had saved the country once before, and if he could not do so again then no one could. In Algeria, the *colons* were elated. They had often broken governments, but now for the first time they had made one, and they were determined to keep it in their clutches. So on his arrival

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in Algiers, early in June, de Gaulle was met by the *colons* with jubilant shouts more sinister than the overripe tomatoes which had greeted the last visiting prime minister. "*Algérie française! Algérie française!*" the mob yelled in unison for hours upon end. The message was: "We put you where you are, de Gaulle. Now do as we tell you! Establish an *Algérie française* on the lines we want, and no nonsense!"

De Gaulle has been very discreet about his diagnosis of the Algerian trouble; but his findings may easily be guessed from his actions and from certain remarks he has dropped. On the one hand, he has dealt a blow to the *ultras*—a feat never before accomplished by any French government. On the other hand, he has notified the F.L.N. in unmistakable terms that there will be no French surrender—"to abandon Algeria [to the F.L.N.] would be stupid and cowardly," he declared.

TO ANY well-informed observer of the Algerian scene who is sufficiently detached to take in the picture as a whole, it is obvious that the country is afflicted with two cancerous growths which are battling for supremacy. The one, of long standing, is virulent European colonialism incarnated in the *ultras*. The other, of more recent origin but no less virulent, is pan-Arab imperialism; its spearhead in Algeria is the F.L.N., but the shaft is handled from Cairo. It will go ill with the Algerians if they succumb to either of these afflictions. The two extremist adversaries in Algeria are alike totalitarian. As far as the *ultras* are concerned, there is nothing secret about their aims. When I saw their leader, Dr. Lefèvre, he said quite candidly: "We will not rest until we carry over into metropolitan France the revolution we started here on May 13. We mean to abolish the parliamentary system, and set up a corporative regime based on the ideas of Mussolini and the social doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. Franco's Spain and Salazar's Portugal will serve as our model. We shall probably have to have a civil war and get rid of de Gaulle, but that can't be helped." This is what would happen if the *ultras* were to have their way.

As against that, suppose that the F.L.N. rebels were to have their way. What then? The French army would be evacuated, together with the *colons* who could not and would not stay behind to be expropriated, if not exterminated. Another spectacular departure, possibly to the next world, would be that of Tunisia's pro-Western President Habib Bourguiba, who has replaced the late Nuri es-Said of Iraq as Nasser's Arab Enemy Number One. Cairo would impose its hegemony over the whole of North Africa. France, to make room for the refugees from Algeria, if for no other reason, would repatriate the 400,000 Moslems whose earnings keep 2,000,000 relatives in Algeria alive today. The abrupt cessation of French economic aid to Algeria—this year alone it will come to $500 million—would reduce the country to famine and chaos. This prospect does not frighten the rebels. A leading F.L.N. intellectual told me: "We shall suffer dire poverty, but we do not mind, so long as we regain our dignity." This regained dignity, in poverty, hunger, and ignorance, might well take the form of expansionist adventures through Africa and Asia Minor, where Israel, after the defeat of France, would be regarded as the last alien intruder inside the Arab world. In any case, Europe would be cut off from the Sahara oil and from the Negro peoples of Africa. Since the new pan-Arab empire could not stand alone, and would lean on Moscow and Peking rather than on London and Washington, the Russian penetration of Africa would be a foregone conclusion.

These perils receded into the realm of abstract speculation after the referendum that was held in France and Algeria at the end of September. In France, some 80 per cent of the electorate—including 1,500,000 habitual Communist voters, who on this occasion deviated from the party line—proclaimed their confidence in de Gaulle. Now that he drew his strength from the democratically expressed will of the nation, which had rallied round him in new-found unity,

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de Gaulle lost no time in pulverizing the *ultras'* influence. He ordered the army officers to quit the Algerian Public Safety Committees. The *ultras,* left to themselves, collapsed in a fluster of idle menaces. Nothing came of their threatened march to the Forum, of their call for a general strike. Their rout was complete and, for the first time in living memory, Paris, not Algiers, was the capital of Algeria. The *ultras* clamored for the integration of Algeria into France and for a strong government. They got both.

THE results of the referendum in Algeria itself were no less significant. The F.L.N. threw into the electoral campaign all the weapons in its arsenal—guns, bombs, knives, and propaganda—to deter the Moslems from voting. In what was their most intensive, far-flung operation since the outbreak of hostilities, they unleashed a terrorist offensive in metropolitan France. They set oil storage tanks ablaze, tried to blow up the Eiffel Tower; they laid an ambush in the heart of Paris, in broad daylight, against Minister of Information Jacques Soustelle, who, by the way, was largely instrumental in giving a Gaullist twist to the *ultras'* May 13 uprising. To make a still bigger impression, the F.L.N. set up in Cairo a "Free Algerian Government." The Moslems in Algeria were warned that if they went to the polls, it would be under pain of death.

The referendum developed into the biggest battle yet of the guerrilla war. Had the Moslems abstained on a large scale from voting, the F.L.N. could rightfully claim to have scored a resounding victory. In the event, the rebels suffered a crushing defeat, for no less than 75 per cent of the Moslem population went to the polls. With every available French soldier, including deskmen, out on duty, the F.L.N. did not dare to attack. Indeed the country was so quiet that wits suggested there should be a referendum every day and then there would be no more violence. Almost as many Moslem women as men voted. Quite a few of these women were having their first glimpse of the outside world since puberty. They were exposing themselves not only to the possible wrath of the F.L.N., but to the certain anger of their husbands, fathers, and brothers. Outside the polling stations at the foot of the Casbah, scuffles broke out among Arabs competing to get to the ballot box first. Voters had to wait hours in long queues. The authorities had never, even in their most sanguine mood, anticipated anything like this.

It might be argued that in the *bled,* the countryside, the Moslems voted because they were more anxious to keep on good terms with the French army than they were afraid of being slaughtered by the F.L.N. But what made the Casbah Arabs besiege the polling stations the way they did? How explain that Moslems whose names had accidentally been omitted from the electoral lists stood around all day insisting that they should be allowed to vote? Some of them had to be ejected from the polling stations when they became over-importunate. True, this was the first occasion when Moslems voted on a footing of equality with the *colons.* For the first time, also, an Algerian election had not been "fixed" in advance: a perfectly honest count was assured by the presence of a control commission formed of metropolitan French magistrates. Still, there must have been some other deep-lying motive for the stampede to the polls. It could only be that the Algerians had grown weary of the ceaseless strife. Surely they hoped that, thanks to this mystic ritual of dropping a white slip of paper marked *oui* into a wooden box, the Big Marabout General de Gaulle would now at last lead them into the promised era of peace with justice.

At Constantine, addressing a predominantly Moslem crowd, de Gaulle disclosed his peace plan. He interpreted the referendum results as a "mutual pledge" between Algeria and France and the overseas territories "to build together their future of liberty, equality, and fraternity." For Algeria, the way out of its sufferings lay through a "profound transformation"—"living conditions for every man and woman must improve day by day; the resources of

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the soil, the human potentialities, the native elite must be brought out and developed; the children must be educated; the whole of Algeria must partake of the well-being and dignity offered by modern civilization."

To this end, the government had adopted a five-year plan of sweeping social and economic reforms. At least every one in ten newcomers to the state administration in metropolitan France would henceforth be chosen from the Arab, Berber, Kabylian, and the Mozabite, that is, Moslem, communities of Algeria. An increased proportion of Moslems—80 per cent—would be admitted to the Algerian civil service. Wages and salaries would be brought up to the same high level as in metropolitan France. 1,200,000 acres of newly fertilized land would be distributed among Moslem farmers. The first phase of industrialization would be completed, with the exploitation of the Algerian oil and natural gas deposits, and the establishment of large metallurgical and chemical plants. A million new dwellings would be built, adequate roads, communications and sanitary facilities would be provided. Regular employment would be created for 400,000 more workers. Two-thirds of all the Moslem boys and girls would be put to school within the next five years, and after another three years education would be universal. The human contacts already initiated, chiefly by the army, would have to be further cultivated.

Out of the program of emancipation the political status of Algeria would emerge. To begin with, at least two-thirds of the 70 deputies elected in Algeria and the Sahara for the French parliament would be Moslems. "In any event," added de Gaulle, "the future of Algeria will—because it is in the nature of things—be built on a dual basis: Algeria's own personality and Algeria's close solidarity with metropolitan France." De Gaulle stressed that "France alone is willing and able" to make the necessary investments that would swiftly raise Algeria from the dark ages into the 20th century.

De Gaulle's historic Constantine speech ended with an appeal to the rebels: "Why kill? People must be helped to live! Why destroy? Our duty is to build! Why hate? Cooperation is wanted. End this absurd combat, and hope will blossom again everywhere in Algeria, the prisons will empty, a future will unfold itself spacious enough for everybody and, in particular, for you. . . . The human race today has the choice of only two ways: war or fraternity. In Algeria, as elsewhere, France for her part has chosen fraternity."

Later, through Moslem intermediaries, de Gaulle contacted the F.L.N. leaders in Cairo. Since secrets are better guarded in the French Fifth Republic than they were in the Fourth, the burden of his message can only be divined. There is reason to believe, however, that—translated from diplomatic into everyday terms—it was to the following effect: "There are, as you perfectly well know, absolutely imperative reasons—moral as well as practical—why France cannot and will not here and now give up Algeria. At the same time, we do not deny the Algerian people's right to self-determination by normal democratic processes. Without prejudice to the ultimate political status of Algeria, let us arrange a truce, hold unfettered elections. While passions are cooling off, France will proceed with the economic and social emancipation of Algeria on a scale and at a speed never before attempted in any under-developed country. Thereafter the Algerians will take for themselves whatever status they want, anything from integration with France to complete independence. In twenty years from now—not a long time in the life of a country which through the millennia has never known nationhood or statehood—when the present tensions between the various Algerian communities, arising from different standards of living, will have disappeared, Algeria will be mature enough to strike out on whatever path she chooses. Accept a cease-fire. It is obvious that the F.L.N. cannot beat the French army, if the army stays —and it will stay in Algeria. Moreover, the Moslem population is more and more withdrawing its support from the *fellaghas*. We can, and if necessary will, intensify our

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military effort to wipe out the F.L.N. But we had rather not do so. There has already been enough blood-letting and hatred. Let us get together to rebuild the future in a spirit of fraternity."

Several F.L.N. leaders, and notably Ferhat Abbas, head of the "Free Algerian Government," intimated their readiness to accept the proferred hand of reconciliation. On October 23, at a press conference in Paris, de Gaulle formally proposed a "peace of the brave." He praised the courage of the rebels, which is undeniable, and he breathed not a word about the equally undeniable savagery of men whose practice it has been to throw bombs at Moslem children attending schools run by the French. But bygones were to be bygones, the time had come to forgive and forget all around, for there has been bestiality on both sides.

The F.L.N., however, is more of an Egyptian than an Algerian organization, and Nasser—himself under the shadow of Khrushchev—vetoed the peace agreement. The more intransigent leaders then began to mutter vaguely about the imminent reinforcement of the Algerian *fellaghas* with "foreign volunteers"—that is with Russians.

De Gaulle, stubborn as ever in the pursuit of his fixed objective, went on to liberate more than 10,000 Algerian nationalists from the detention camps, in preparation for the general elections. He wanted to have before him in the French parliament authentic spokesmen of the Algerian people. He did not care if they were F.L.N., M.N.A., or anything else—he had let it be known that Ferhat Abbas could, if he so wished, present himself as a candidate—so long as they were truly representative. Only criminals, those who had themselves physically done the killing, raping, or looting, were barred.

In the event, the elections were vitiated by the fear-psychosis with which all Algerians are smitten. The F.L.N. was afraid to expose itself to a possible disavowal by the electorate. Moderate Moslem nationalists and European liberals would not be coaxed into the limelight, for they were liable to be set upon and crushed either by the rebels or the *ultras* or both, who have for so long occupied the center of the Algerian stage. Not all the assurances from Paris could persuade the progressive Algerian elements that the army would become overnight the protector of nonconformist politicians. A few Socialists and some enlightened Moslems, who took de Gaulle's Constantine speech as their electoral platform, tried to come forward; but the bulk of the candidates were out-and-out integrationists. Thus, the seventy-one Algerian members of the new French parliament will reflect a single shade, rather than the whole spectrum, of political opinion in this country.

De Gaulle was disappointed, but not discouraged, by this sharp setback to his step-by-step plan for the establishment of peace with justice. He has not given up his attempt to find "valid interlocutors" in Algeria, with whom the government will seek an agreed solution to the Algerian dilemma. His task now is to vanquish fear, even in the absence of a truce. Such conditions must be created that moderate-minded Algerians, both European and Moslem, will feel it safe to interpose themselves between the two extremist adversaries, to challenge the common thesis of the *ultras* and the rebels that a struggle to the death is the only way to a better life. The Algerian masses must be encouraged to assert themselves at last against the fanatics in either camp. To this end, de Gaulle has set about reorganizing the army in Algeria. Not only must it be a more efficient striking force against the enfeebled *fellaghas,* but it must still further detach itself from the weakened *ultras.* It must manifestly owe undivided allegiance to the central civil authority in Paris, impartially serving the welfare of the Algerian people as a whole.

When will peace with justice come to Algeria? Peace may come soon, but the introduction of justice will be an arduous and gradual process. What is certain is that only a France liberal, generous, strong, and resolute, can at this juncture dispense the justice without which Algeria cannot achieve enduring peace.

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GAMES A LA MODE, 1938

A Story

LORE GROSZMANN

ON SATURDAY, when I had been with them a week, Mrs. Levine decided it was time for me to cheer up. "I know what she wants," she said, looking up at her eldest daughter. "She wants somebody to play with. Go and call that Mrs. Rosen that got the other little refugee and she can come over and play. Wouldn't that be nice?" she said to me. "Wouldn't you like a nice little girl to play with?"

I said no, I felt cheerful enough and I didn't feel like playing with anybody. I had been an only child and preferred grown-ups. I was trying to think of something grown-up to say to Mrs. Levine to keep her there talking to me. "How long please does a letter take from Vienna to England?"

"Two or three days," said Mrs. Levine and sighed, and groaning she rose from her knees. She was too fat and old to have conversations with me while I sat under the dining-room table and refused to come out. "That's the third time since breakfast she asked me that," Mrs. Levine said and then she said she was going to call Mrs. Rosen anyway to bring the little kid over to play and that would cheer me up.

I stood at the window and saw the thin, angular, tall woman leading a small fat child up the path toward the front door. The little girl had red hair and a white rabbit's-wool hat tied under the chin. She carried a red patent leather pocketbook.

Mrs. Levine walked into the hall to let them in and I came to the drawing-room door and watched in some excitement. The child stood perfectly still and allowed herself to be peeled out of her thick little coat, switching the pocketbook to the right hand while the left was being slipped out of the coat sleeve and ungloved and back to the left to get the right glove off.

Then Mrs. Levine called me to take my visitor into the dining room to play and Annie would bring our tea.

The little girl stood in front of the fire holding her pocketbook, looking straight before her. She was an exceedingly plain child and I knew that here I had nothing to fear. I started on that exchange of essential information which in later life lies hidden still under our first urbanities:

"What's your name?" I asked.

"Helene Rubichek." She didn't ask me mine so I told her what it was and asked her how old she was.

"Seven."

I said that I was ten years old. I told her that my father worked in a bank and asked her what hers did. She said her father had had a newspaper but he didn't do anything now. I said mine didn't work in the bank any more either, and because it felt so wonderfully easy to be saying things in German for the first time in a week I went on to tell her about my mother who played the piano and my grandparents who had a house. I said, "I know a game. Let's guess which of our parents will come sooner, yours or mine."

"Mine are coming next month," she said.

"Mine too," I lied. "I bet mine come sooner than yours," and then I asked her what she had in her pocketbook, but Helene put her head on one side so that her cheek came to lie like a fat pouch on her shoulder and wouldn't answer.

LORE GROSZMANN was born in Vienna in 1928, and at the age of ten went to England, where she received her bachelor's degree from the University of London. In 1951 she came to live in the United States; a resident of New York City, she is at present working on a novel. This is her first story in COMMENTARY.

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"Anyway," I said, "let's play," because I had just thought of another game and wanted to be playing. "Let's play house. Do you want to?"

"Yes," said Helene.

"All right," I said, "come on." I took her by the hand and led her to the dining-room table in the middle of the room and made her get under it and crawled in after. We squatted together. "Now they can't even see us," I said, looking in delight around our pretty compact little world under the table roof, hedged in by a complex of chair legs. "Now we have to be comfortable," I said. "Are you comfortable?"

"Yes," said Helene.

"All right, let's play. I'll be the mother. You be the child. You have to cry and I'll make you feel better. Put your pocketbook down so you can be comfortable." Helene put her head on one side and looked straight before her. "Never mind then," I said, "go on," and I bobbed up and down in my excitement because I knew precisely what it was I wanted her to be doing so that I could do what I wanted to do. "Cry!" But Helene sat growing fatter and more stolid every moment. I thought it was because she wasn't properly comfortable, holding the pocketbook, and I said, "Put it down over there."

Helene said, "No."

"You can have it back as soon as we've finished playing. Please," I wheedled. "I'll take it for you, come on," and I put my hand out to take it but the pocketbook was held in a grip of iron. "Come on," I said, tugging hard, "please!" But as I looked into her face I saw that it had broken up, changed out of all recognition and become perfectly red. The cheeks had closed up over both eyes. I knew what was happening. Helene was really crying. A round black hole appeared where her mouth had been and out of it came a huge and hideous roaring.

The door opened. Mrs. Levine and Mrs. Rosen came running. I emerged protesting that I had only wanted Helene to be comfortable and I had said please. Mrs. Rosen had hold of Helene's wrist and was dragging the rest of her, cramped in a fat little ball and yelling monotonously, out from under the table. "Come on now," she kept saying, "do stop crying, will you. Do stop."

Mrs. Levine said to me, "What do you want to pick a fight for with the little girl when she comes to visit. You have to be a little hostess, don't you?"

"But I said 'please,'" I explained while Mrs. Rosen over my head said to Mrs. Levine, "She never did that before. For goodness' sake do stop, can't you. At home she never even opens her mouth or anything. It gives me the creeps. I tell my husband if it wasn't for her parents coming in a month I wouldn't know what to do with her, she makes me so nervous. My husband laughs at me. He says she'll come around. He always wanted children and he comes home at night and he brings her toys and things and that little pocketbook and he jokes and laughs, but it's me that's left alone with her all day and all she ever does is stand around and I don't know what she wants or if she understands what I say to her and I get so nervous." I was watching in fascination the way Mrs. Rosen's left cheek kept jumping independently of the rest of her.

Now Mrs. Levine had begun to talk about me and I listened with that hungry silence which one renders to conversations of which oneself is the subject. "This one talks all right," Mrs. Levine was saying, "don't you?" and she patted my head. "When I tell her to come out from the table and be happy with us, she says she's happier down there. She's got an answer for everything." Mrs. Levine bent down to little Helene whose noise was becoming exhausted and mechanical and now abruptly stopped. "We'll have some nice tea, eh? And cake. Go call Annie," she said to me.

Annie came with the tray and she spread the cloth and poured our tea and heaped little Helene's plate with cake while I watched in an agony of impatience. I was dying to get back under the table, ridden by the sharp and clear desire to have Helene sitting beside me in our miniature house in an orgy of coziness, but Helene kept stuffing her fat face, with leisurely solemnity.

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Her pocketbook lay beside her. When she was finished Annie gave her another slice and then Mrs. Rosen came in bringing Helene's coat and said it was time to go.

"Say goodbye to the little girl," Mrs. Levine said at the front door.

"Goodbye," I said and then in German I called after her, "Are you coming again?" but she could not have heard me: Mrs. Rosen was leading her away down the path as if it were something at once fragile, and strange, and not very appetizing that she had there by the hand and Helene never turned around.

I asked Mrs. Levine if Helene would come again. She said yes, if I liked. I said when. Mrs. Levine said, "Maybe she can come again next Saturday." And so I began there and then to wait for Saturday in my mind and counted the days between and there were seven, but on the sixth day I got my first letter from home.

WHEN Helene came in the afternoon I could hardly wait to take her into the dining room and shut the door. I said, "I know a game. Let's get under the table."

Helene said, "No."

"All right. We can play it out here. It's a guessing game. You have to guess in how many days you will get a letter from your parents. First you guess and then I guess my letter, and the one who guesses too early has lost. Go on. You guess."

Helene looked straight before her. "Go on," I said, "guess how many days."

Helene said, "Three."

"All right," I said, "you guess three days. Now it's my turn, I have to figure." I figured that the letter I had taken to the corner post box in the morning would take two or three days to reach Vienna, say four to be on the safe side and they would answer the next day or the day after, say another four days, that makes eight and then four days back, twelve, add two more days to make sure, that's fourteen. "I guess fourteen days. Now let's get under the table." But Helene would not and cried and Mrs. Levine ran in to scold me and Annie brought our tea and after that Mrs. Rosen took Helene home.

But on the following Monday the dozen or so refugee children that had been distributed among the families of Liverpool were taken to the day school they were to attend and after that I saw Helene every day.

On Thursday I came in glory. I said that I had had a letter which made it five days and I had guessed fourteen days so I had won by nine.

Next day at break, in the schoolyard, Helene said that she had won too and she had had a letter. "You didn't win," I said. "I won. Because you said three days and your letter took six so you lost by three days, see?" Helene did not see. She looked straight before her. "Let's do it again," I said. "I sent a letter today and I have to figure." This time I figured so well that I made it twenty-one days. "Twenty-one days," I said happily. "Now it's your turn. You guess."

"Two days," said Helene. In all the weeks we played she never did catch on.

A delightful thing had meanwhile developed. I had written my parents about my friend Helene Rubichek and how her parents were coming to England. My father knew of Anton Rubichek by name as a journalist and got in touch with him and arranged to send me a present, a box of sweets perhaps, a surprise. More wonderful yet, my parents were going to visit Helene's parents on Saturday just like Helene was visiting me. This intrigued me: I wanted Helene to describe the room to me in which they would be having their coffee, to give me an idea how the furniture was arranged, so that I could the better think of them sitting there, but Helene wasn't at all good at giving anybody any ideas and I made up my own picture. The next letter from home destroyed this picture: it seemed my parents had never sat in that room at all. It was explained in an enclosed note, sealed, and addressed to Mrs. Levine and she read it to her daughters. They were very excited and then Mrs. Levine called Mrs. Rosen on the telephone and they talked a long time. I got a new picture of my parents standing outside Helene's parents' apartment door that had

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been locked and taped and sealed off with an official seal. The neighbors said the Rubicheks had been taken away that morning.

This troubled me deeply: I practiced imagining what my parents were doing, and where, at the very instant that I was thinking of them and then trying to imagine that they were really doing something entirely different in quite another place. It made me giddy and that frightened me. I came running to Mrs. Levine and told her my stomach felt sick. She gave me some medicine and I vomited and then I felt better. I sat down and wrote a letter home.

I posted it the next morning on my way to school. During break I found Helene and said, "This time I guess thirty days."

Helene said, "I'm not playing any more."

"Yes you are," I said, appalled because I could not face the weeks ahead unless they were divided into periods of which I could see the end, with a letter to wait for, like the piece of chocolate that had always been in the middle of the plate, underneath so many spoonfuls of rice pudding. "Don't you like to play?" I said anxiously, for Helene was laying her cheek on her shoulder. "I'll show you how to win. Guess twenty days and then you won't expect a letter and suddenly it will come as a surprise, you see?"

But Helene said, "I won't get any more letters."

"Yes you might," I said, but I knew that Helene had turned obstinate past recall.

After that I made friends with another girl. Renate was two months older than I. She had tight black hair and wore glasses and she was as smart as I was. After I taught her the game she only lost once and as the weeks passed into months she would come up with fantastic and imaginative mishaps to delay her mail spurring me to ever greater stretches of unlikelihood. If she made her letters travel the long way around the world I must send mine via the moon and so the thing got out of hand and wasn't any fun any more.

Renate thought of a new game. We had to guess when our parents would come. I said, "I guess two years." Renate guessed five years. I said, "All right, mine is six years," but she said that didn't count because I had had my turn. I said I didn't care. I knew a secret. She said, what. I told her how I had heard Mrs. Levine tell her eldest daughter that Mrs. Rosen didn't know what she was going to do with Helene now that her parents were dead.

"Oh," said Renate, "then Helene is an orphan." And so Renate and I stood having our secrets together. I asked her if she would like to be best friends with me, instead of Helene, and she said she would.

But I kept looking curiously across at Helene who was an orphan. She stood by herself in the middle of the schoolyard looking before her. She still wore her little thick coat and her rabbit's-wool hat tied under the chin. One would never have guessed from looking at her that her parents were dead. I tried imagining that my parents were dead and wondered how one could tell. I concentrated on the person of my father but as had been lately happening I could only see him spread-eagled high above the ground comically wriggling his arms and legs, trying to get down from the thing like a telegraph pole on which he was trussed up. I wondered if that might mean that he was dead and tried to imagine him climbing down but could not crystallize this idea in my mind's eye and so I removed it from him and focused it on my mother but whoops, up she went, too, right on the pole and I knew that she would not come down until I had removed my thought from her. For the rest of the week I was continually at work to stop myself from thinking of my parents so that they could keep their feet on the earth. Mrs. Levine worried about me: she would see me suddenly shake my head or change chairs or dive under the table and would say, "For goodness' sake, can't you sit still a minute? I never saw such a child for fidgeting," and she asked me if I wouldn't like to have little Helene to play with. I told her I wasn't playing with Helene any more but I had a new friend, Renate. Mrs. Levine said to ask her to come to tea.

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Renate came on Saturday. I took her into the dining room and we played house. We sat under the table and pulled the dining-room chairs to hedge us in closely all around. Renate said that she wanted to be the mother and I must be the child which wasn't the way I had imagined it and she kept bossing me instead of my bossing her and she talked too quick and moved too suddenly and everything was quite wrong again and what I wanted was not there though I hankered after it as one hankers after some delicious taste that titillates the memory out of the past and was so present now in my desires that I began to labor under the false memory of having tasted it with little Helene and forgetting in the present disappointment the frustration of the past. I wished with all my heart that it were Helene I had with me now, docile, under the table.

In the months that followed Renate and I became very good friends. We had different games and in the end it was I who won by a year and a half.

ONE Tuesday, shortly after we had got back from a lunch break I was called out of class into the study of the headmaster. Mrs. Levine was there and they both looked very kindly at me. Mrs. Levine said for me to get dressed at once. There was a surprise waiting for me at home.

"My parents," I said, "have come!" I imagined them sitting in Mrs. Levine's armchairs, right in front of the fire.

"Well," said Mrs. Levine, "so! Aren't you excited, you funny child?"

"Yes I am. I am excited," I said, but I was busy noticing the queer way my chest was being emptied and my head clearing and my shoulders freed as of some huge weight that must, since I now felt it being lifted and rolled away, have been there all the time without my knowing it. I stood still in frowning concentration unwilling to be distracted from the intense relief like the unknotting of a cramp or the passing of nausea that gives the physical body a sudden sensuous knowledge of itself as if the drawing of breath were a sweetness and the flowing of blood a luxury, but Mrs. Levine was saying to the headmaster, "You can never tell with children. All she does is write letters to her parents and mope around and now they're here she isn't even pleased."

"But I *am* pleased," I said and began to bob up and down then, and all the way home in the taxi because it would never do to have Mrs. Levine think I was not pleased and excited, but every now and then I allowed myself a delicious peek inside myself and planned how I might slip away between now and bedtime for a moment and hidden beneath the table among the chairs sit and entertain at last the full-blown and perfect flower of content which, being of the same species as ecstasy, hardly had the life-span of an hour and faded, back at the house, amidst the hugging and the talking and the smiling-grinning and the having to show off my parents to my English family and my new familiarities to my parents and my jumping joy to both, all that evening and the next day and for days after. By then my good fortune and my cheerfulness had become a habit as normal to me as the misery had been before and could no longer be separately savored. And the table too was becoming another piece of furniture, though its underside held a vague promise still as of something wanted or intended but grown so dim that I did not stop amidst the business of the day to remember what it had been.

In the course of settling in, there came to light another present among my parents' luggage, a box packed for the little friend Helene Rubichek. "Oh, her," I said, "she isn't even at school any more."

"No," Mrs. Levine added, "that Mrs. Rosen couldn't keep her. She's in another home now."

"Where is she?" I asked, momentarily frowning at the glimpse I caught of little Helene stuck on the telegraph pole wriggling helplessly between heaven and earth.

"I don't just remember," Mrs. Levine said, "but I think they put her in another town."

And so I put Helene out of my mind.

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FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

CATS AND CHRISTMAS TREES

The Old Struggle in New Suburbia

SYLVIA ROTHCHILD

SELMA APPLEBAUM and I are neighbors but not friends. We're not a pair. When my father saw her he said, "A pretty little woman! She makes me think of a new-born calf." I've been likened to many things, but never to a calf.

Selma and I grew up in the same apartment house in Brooklyn, under a cloud of depression that was not an era but a world. We played in a sour-smelling hallway in winter and on our adjoining fire escapes in summer. It didn't trouble us, however, because we knew no other world and had no one to whom we could compare ourselves.

We clung to each other because we were the only two girls, the same age, in the house. We tapped signals on the radiator pipes to wake each other in the morning and tied vital messages to a string that we lowered from her window to mine directly below.

Though we had been inseparable until we were ten, we said goodbye when our parents moved us to more prosperous neighborhoods and never saw each other again until we accidentally bought identical houses right next door to each other. Not in our wildest dreams had we seen ourselves in split-level houses, carpeted, draped, furnished with the latest Paul McCobb. But two years ago I painted my house brown, because hers was pink, and we shared the cost of the cedars that we planted on the line between our properties. Only friendship and understanding elude us. We have but to meet each other outdoors to clash, like a scythe against a stone.

Take the question of the kitten, for instance. Selma called my children to her door one day and gave them a present of a six-weeks-old kitten, a beautiful ball of gray fluff with surprised blue eyes and trembling legs.

The children, overcome with their good fortune, came running to tell me the news.

"I'm sorry," I said sadly. "Take it back!" It was as if I had opened a faucet. They all began to cry. It was not a time for me to get weak. I led the parade back to Selma's followed by three crying children and one small cat.

"Why didn't you ask me before you gave it to them?"

"You won't let them keep it?" she asked in amazement.

"I don't like cats," I said firmly.

"But the children adore them. You should see them playing on my porch with the kittens. It's selfish to deprive them of such a little pleasure."

"It's not a question of depriving," I said. "I had a cat once and it didn't work out. The cat was miserable and so was I."

"What do you mean, miserable," she said with a laugh, and the children listened hopefully.

"I mean that I can't stand a cat walking between my feet. I can't bear it on the kitchen table, the couch, or my bed. I won't let it tear holes in the rug. All day long, I'm throwing the cat. . . . And it's hard to throw

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SYLVIA ROTHCHILD has become familiar to our readers (beginning with her first short story, "The Mothers," in October 1951) for her keen portrayal of Jewish life on the American scene. Her last previous sketch, "Home for Pesach," appeared in our April 1958 number.

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a cat when you can't bear to touch it. I have to find my gloves every time I want to pick it up. It's no life for a cat. Your kitten will be better off at your house where you'll love it."

"If you feel so sorry for it, then love it," she said.

"You can't make up your mind to love something," I tried to explain. "For me, a cat is a scapegoat. When the children drive me crazy, I throw the cat out in the cold. If I get angry with my husband, I don't feed the cat. My mother hated cats, my grandmother hated cats, and I hate cats. What do you want from me?"

"I want to know why," she said stubbornly. "My mother hated cats too. I used to plead with her for a kitten and she would holler, 'Dope, in your own house you can have fifteen cats and twenty-two dogs with my blessing, but not in my house.' As soon as I was married I bought two collie pups and three cats. Sidney nearly went crazy, but I had to get it out of my system. I can't understand you. Cats are clean. You can train them to stay off the table and they keep the field mice away. They're so nice and fluffy to touch. What are you so excited about?"

"I would only enjoy a cat if it would behave like a human being. I don't like animals, even trained animals."

"How unreasonable can you be?" she said sarcastically. "It's hard enough to get people to act human, let alone cats."

"Why do I have to be reasonable?" I asked. "Maybe I don't like cats because they're beautiful, self-centered, and lazy; all the things I would like to be. Maybe it makes me too envious to have a cat in the house, sleeping and stretching itself while I work."

"Now I've heard everything," she said. "You have a phobia. It's too much for me." She bent down to the children's height and said, "Now don't you be like your mother. Any time you want to play with kittens, you come right over here and don't pay any attention to her. OK?"

I went back to the house alone. She had already alienated my children.

It was practically a campaign. The day before Christmas Selma came to the kitchen door at three-thirty. The children were eating cookies and milk. They had just come in from school and their boots and coats were still on the floor where they had dropped them.

She had a package behind her back. "I have something for you," she said. "Promise you won't get angry!"

"Why should I get angry?"

"I bought a little Christmas tree at the A & P this morning and Sidney just came home with another one his boss gave him. Take one! The children will have a good time with it. I have plenty of tinsel and decorations."

The children stopped chewing and listened. The eldest, full of eight-year-old piety and conviction, shook her head. "We can't have a tree," she said. "We're Jewish."

Six-year-old Judy was not so burdened by conviction. She jumped out of her chair and began to hug my knees. "Please, please," she begged, "let us have it." Four-year-old Joe took life in his own hands. He pulled the tree out of Selma's hand and said, "Thanks, we'll keep it for you."

I felt my face grow hot and red.

"Well, that's settled," said Selma. "Alice can come back with me and I'll give her the decorations."

I shook my head. "We can't keep it."

"Your father won't come till Sunday. You can throw it away by then."

"My father has nothing to do with it," I said angrily.

"Of course he has," she said. "I'll never forget our first tree. It was only about ten inches high. Marla was only a baby. Pa walked in unexpectedly and I thought I'd die. He took it off the table and threw it in the wastebasket. . . . But even he's learning. A few years ago he began bringing presents for the children. He's almost a changed man and so comical. Last year he stared and stared at the tree as if it would explode in his face and finally he said, 'At least you can't say it's ugly.' "

"My father isn't your father and I'm not you," I said stiffly. "Take it back."

"What are you fighting?" she asked. "A little tree with a few strings of tinsel? What would happen if you bought the children a few presents and made them happy? How foolish you are."

Judy loosened her hold on my legs and Joe put the tree down.

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"Christmas doesn't belong to me," I said. "Please, just take it back."

"The trouble with you," said Selma, "is that you think too much. You're always looking for trouble and you don't know how to enjoy yourself." She waved the tree at me and said, "It's for fun. You're an artistic person. You could make it pretty."

"I've decorated a Christmas tree," I said. "Once is enough."

"What happened?" she asked. "Did it fall on you?"

I suppose I would have tried to tell her then, but she didn't give me a chance.

"You're the one who goes to the Andersons on Christmas Eve," she said. "If that's not against your principles, why such a fuss about a tree?"

Words couldn't help us. We were not talking about the same thing. I wished that the Andersons would invite the Applebaums instead of the Schwartzes one year; or perhaps both of us at the same time so that the other neighbors could learn to tell us apart. But the invitations were not mine to give and Selma might sit at her window for a lifetime of Christmases, looking at the cars parked on the other side of the street, feeling like an eight-year-old left out of a birthday party. I knew, though we never spoke of it, that she wanted me to stay at home because she wasn't asked.

One year I made the mistake of telling her that it was not as gay as she thought. There were only about a dozen couples. The men talked about their businesses and the women about children. A few people danced to old records in the den. When Jack Anderson reached the proper state of relaxation, he played the piano and everyone sang the great old songs, "Clementine," "I've Been Working on the Railroad," and "Old Black Joe." It was as cheerful as a PTA supper.

But Selma wanted to know what we ate and what clothes everyone wore. She wanted a recipe for the eggnog and the ham spread. She was annoyed when I evaded her questions and asked me point blank, "If it's so uninteresting, why is it that you go every year?"

I went—because they asked me. A few days before Christmas Betty Anderson would bring the children a dish of Christmas cookies and ask me to stop and have a drink with her and her husband on Christmas Eve. It was the extent of our relations. The rest of the year we waved or smiled when we passed each other. Though there was only a narrow road between our houses, weeks went by in winter without our greeting each other.

She invited the same people year after year. They all lived in our development and knew each other from church meetings and the school PTA. My husband and I were not members of the crowd and were treated with the respect reserved for outsiders. Someone always came to tell us of a lovely Greenberg family they knew in Brooklyn, or a clever boy by the name of Shapiro their son had met in college. We were asked if we knew Goldsteins in Los Angeles or Kleins in Richmond. Last Christmas, a neighbor by the name of Hill—or maybe it was Hull, or Hall, even—came up to me, took my elbow, and led me carefully to a chair opposite his.

"Let me tell you something, Mrs. Applebaum," he said, with a smile.

"I'm Martha Schwartz," I reminded him, but he only waved his hand to show that it made no difference so late in the evening. The punch bowl was nearly empty.

"The most important thing to remember, Mrs. Applebaum, is that we must not judge each other. Do you agree with me there?"

"I agree," I said, without knowing whether or not I really did.

"Good," he said. "Then we needn't forgive each other. You can't forgive, without judging. Do you agree?"

Before I could make up my mind, his wife came to save him from himself.

"You're a nice girl," he said in parting. "I hope Santa Claus is real nice to you!"

Selma called the next morning to ask if we had fun at the party.

"It was interesting," I said.

"What do you mean, interesting? Either you had a good time or you didn't. Listen, you don't have to tell me about it if you don't want to."

Two years had passed, but she hadn't forgiven me for keeping secrets from her. "Well, I guess you're going to the Andersons tonight," she said as she opened the door to leave. "Have fun!"

The children whispered at the table, but

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they didn't wheedle. They were used to me. They hung up their coats and went down to the basement to play.

I was left alone to think—too much, or too little. It didn't matter. What *was* the matter with me? Another phobia? Why does Selma need her little tree so badly? Why should she make me so angry?

In the house where Selma and I grew up, Christmas was a wreath on the hallway door and a dollar bill for the superintendent. It was carols at school and little baskets of candy the teachers gave us in exchange for the scarves, brooches, and boxes of chocolates we brought to them. The only one who had a Christmas tree was Mrs. Gerrity, the corsetière. Mrs. Gerrity and the Negro superintendent, who slept in the basement, were the only outsiders and the only representatives of that majority which we pretended didn't exist.

I remember enjoying Mrs. Gerrity's Christmas lights against the dirty brick walls. I was shocked once when I overheard a neighbor say, "Oh, how she flaunts that tree, flaunts it in our faces." I always felt sorry for Mrs. Gerrity. No one came in to share a cup of coffee with her. Voices changed when she came by with her valise of laces and stays. She had no children, only a fluffy, tan little Pomeranian that wore a blue bow around its neck in summer and a plaid wool coat in winter. On Purim I would bring her some *hamantashen,* and on Passover a small package of matzah that she liked. I would leave them at the door and run, frightened by the barking dog.

One night my father and I came out of the subway and found Mr. Gerrity walking in front of us, singing at the top of his voice. Not only was he singing, but he stopped at every fire hydrant, jumped over it gaily, calling out, "Johnny on a pony, in a one, two, three." I thought it was very funny until I saw my father's face in a grimace of pity and revulsion.

"*Shiker iz er, trinken miz er,*" he said sadly, "*veil er iz a goy.*"

There were others watching Joe Gerrity on his way home. No one said, "There goes a happy man!"

How strange to think of the Gerritys whom I haven't seen in twenty-five years! I lose my car keys every day and have trouble remembering my own telephone number.

There was a knock at the door. Selma was back. "You wouldn't have an onion?" she asked. "I forgot to buy onions this morning."

"I can always find a spare onion," I said, as I reached into the vegetable bin. I took out the onions, closed the metal door, and suddenly remembered so clearly why I sent the tree back with such determination.

"Don't think I'm just stubborn, Selma," I said. "It reminds me of things I don't want to remember."

"I didn't say you were stubborn," Selma said.

I WANTED her to understand me. I tried to explain a day, seventeen, eighteen years ago. It was just after the war began in Europe. I went up to an insurance office on Wall Street, looking for a job. I waited in line with the other girls, all of us holding the same advertisement from the New York *Times.* I was there at seven-thirty, was interviewed at nine, and was working at the filing cabinets at ten-thirty. The salary was eighteen dollars a week, twice as much as I had been earning as a doctor's assistant.

I felt so lucky that morning. I was only eighteen, but I imagined that I had waited on countless lines, only to be rejected at the end. I filed the cards and apportioned my money; so much for home, so much for clothes, for lunches, for entertainment. The girls around me were friendly and talkative. We ate lunch together and hurried back to decorate a Christmas tree that had been set up in the lobby. I helped unwrap the glass ornaments and tossed the tinsel. I passed the silver angels and cotton-bearded Santa Clauses. I felt myself expanding, opening up with joy and freedom and the smell of pine in the dusty city. It was the big world and I was in it!

At three o'clock the personnel manager sent for me. "You were hired by mistake," she said. "We don't take Jews."

"Why?" I asked boldly.

"You take too many holidays," she said.

"I won't take any holidays," I promised.

She shook her head and handed me the pay envelope. A slip of paper counted out the hours and the social security. The two dollar bills were crisp and clean and the change rattled.

I stood there, stupidly, waiting. The woman turned her back to me and looked

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out the window to let me know it was time for me to go.

"It's no wonder there's a war," I said, as the tears started to fall. "No wonder people are always killing each other." She didn't turn around.

I was sobbing in the elevator, but the operator didn't ask me why. The tree was glistening and shimmering in the lobby. Wreaths hung from all the windows and the Salvation Army Santa Clauses were ringing their bells. I walked from Wall Street to the Eighth Avenue subway with tears streaming down my face.

SELMA listened with her mouth open and her head cocked.

"That was years ago," she said. "There are laws now. It doesn't happen any more."

"A Christmas tree always reminds me of it."

"You're mean," she said. "Because you had a bad experience, you'll take three innocent children and mix them up with memories that would be better forgotten."

My jaw was set. I gave her the onions.

"Thanks," she said with a shrug. "I'll pay you back tomorrow."

It was almost dark when she left. Christmas lights were lit in all the houses across the street. Was it fair to look at their lights while they saw darkness in my window? The symbols were misleading, but was I the one to change them? How could I? Anxiety had a hold on me. I braked the floorboard of the car when my husband was driving. I watched the propellers in a plane, sure that they would stop turning if I stopped looking. I was afraid to forget the past for fear that it would come back to remind me . . . an ugly chain; small unkindness and huge atrocity, petty discourtesy and murder, all linked together.

The children were so quiet. I tried to open the door to their playroom but it was locked. "Don't come yet," someone shouted. "We're not ready!"

I waited for Judy to open the door with a flourish. "Come see what we made for you," she said proudly.

A branch of pine was pushed into a pot of begonias. Buttons, beads, and small toys hung from every twig. My best earrings formed a star at the top.

"It's all right for us to have it," Alice said with authority. "It's not real. It's only homemade."

"We'll put everything back," Judy promised.

"I won't break anything," her little brother added.

"Look who's watching," Judy said, pointing to the window.

Selma's two cats snuggled against the warm windowpane. Their eyes burned like coals in the dark.

"Can I let them in for a minute," Judy begged.

"They can't hurt anything down here," Alice said.

"Another time," I promised.

"When, when," they asked all at once.

"Someday," I said, hopefully.

What should I tell three innocent children?

Anything is possible. I may someday bring Christmas presents to their children and stare at their tree, comforting myself to see that it isn't ugly. Who knows what the world will be then?

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CEDARS OF LEBANON

TESTAMENT OF A JEWISH INTELLECTUAL: II

The "Cult of Art" in Yiddish Writing

MENAHEM BORAISHA

MENAHEM BORAISHA'S autobiographical essay on his career as a poet falls into two parts, the first of which we presented last month. In it he discusses his own stubborn clinging to traditional Jewish values, as against the newer "cult" of the individual practiced by his fellow writers. Here, in the last half of the essay, Boraisha describes a second obstacle between himself and his contemporaries, the "cult of art." Of particular interest are Boraisha's reference to Judah Halevi as the ideal Jewish poet writing in an "alien" milieu; and his oblique criticism of his own mentor, Judah Leib Peretz, for exploiting figures from the past to create the illusion of integrated faith. Both selections (in my translation from the Yiddish) are printed with the permission of the author's widow and literary executor, Mrs. Sarah Boraisha.—JACOB SLOAN

THE controversy between Judaism and Hellenism was not, in reality, concerned with beauty or form. If it is a question of writing, the Bible stands as a remarkable monument to style. . . . Nor did the controversy revolve around the applied arts, which aim to give a holiday decorativeness to everyday life. Rather, Judaism took issue with Hellenism where it perceived that beauty represented an attempt to overwhelm or expunge entirely the other attributes of Divinity. For Judaism, the injunction against making graven images is in effect a warning lest those creations of art should become gods, and art itself idolatry.

It was inevitable that in my time the cult of the liberated self should be coupled with the cult of art. Both were part of the Emancipation, of secularization. Bereft of religion, men looked for values and guidance to intellectuals—to party leaders. The artist supplanted the master of miracles—the charismatic man imbued with the spirit of holiness. All liberation movements, Jewish and non-Jewish alike, social as well as national, have handed over to the artist this important dominating role. But it may be said that we Jews have had the deepest need to slake our thirst for *charisma* and holiness.

Then, too, it was relatively easier for us to raise up the cult of art. It was, in the first place, only a continuance of the older cult of letters. Secondly, the cult of art was introduced gradually, in easy stages: we moved from pious morality books to enlightened morality books, thence to folk literature and from there to revolutionary literature. In general, the cult of art had become part of the new secular life; but to the Yiddish writers of my generation it became a priestly vocation. . . . They wrapped themselves and the vessels with which they conducted their sacred service in mantles of untouchability; they became a caste.

Judah Halevi is the prime example of a Jewish poet writing in a milieu of a thoroughgoing secular culture. Halevi, in the content and the form of his writings, made his due obeisance to secularism; yet essentially he remained a national and religious poet who was at the same time, inseparably, a builder and defender of his faith. We in our time have had four writers in the tradition of Judah Halevi—Peretz, Bialik, Liesin, Yehoash. . . . In the writings of each of these, the secular and individualistic strand parallels the traditional, nationalist strand. . . . It was not until this group of direct in-

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heritors of Judah Halevi's eclecticism had gone that the strict demands of pure art began to make themselves felt. . . .

The world-wide intellectual upheavals, the social revolutions of our time, national catastrophes, settlement of new continents, messianic tempests and movements, all have thrust pure poetry into the role of poetry of idea; all life has tended to generalize the personal. Poetry that insisted on remaining stubbornly individualistic was isolated, provincial in the wide country of literature. . . .

On the other hand, art took the position that general ideas and motifs should be sieved through emotion and individual experience; art must transform ideas by its image and vision into song, must purify and refine away all the crudities in its particular vessels—diction, rhythm, verse, rhyme. . . . Never leaving its ivory tower, art nevertheless retained complete sovereignty. And it almost managed to keep out the third element of Judah Halevi's triad—faith—completely.

Now, the literature that my generation produced . . . contains a wealth of sacred and visionary elements. In the lyric poetry, these derive from the poet himself. But in the epic and dramatic poetry, and in the prose writings, they are expressed in dramatic characters which antedate the break with the synagogue. Peretz was the first to slake his own thirst for faith by constructing figures of great believers from the Hasidic prayer rooms and the rabbis' courts; the other writers then imitated him. The stronger tradition's imperative became—the imperative of a *whole faith*—the more the poet went back to history, to his father, his grandfather, his great-grandfather. Perhaps in the future someone will take all the religious elements shining through our literature and put them together into a systematic whole.

My generation could not accomplish that task. Not that we lacked vision. Rarely has a generation had so much collective vision as the one that produced the new Jewish literature. But something stood in the way, preventing a synthesis between the generation and its realization of its vision. What stood in the way was not only intellectual differences of opinion: it was the idolatry of pure art. We dared not put a foot outside the limits of the territory where art reigned supreme. . . .

I remained outside the grand mansion of art. . . . My first conscious reply to the "pure" poets was my book *Sand*. It had a national idea, clearly impressed on every page. Nothing more or less than a morality book. The critic S. Niger put it gently when he spoke of my book as a reversion to the "congregation of Israel." He really showed me mercy. For here was a man deliberately reverting, in this day and age, to tendentiousness and moralizing. Here was a man who was using art to preach an idea. Had he succeeded? How could he have! It was the first attempt in the poetry of that time to represent Judaism not through the whole faith of our grandfathers but in the atomized faith of their grandchildren. It did not succeed because the canvas was too large, the individual figures never came to life; the morality and lyricism were constantly clashing; and, perhaps most important, it could not succeed because my generation could not abide the idea of a conspiracy against art.

But for me this was the beginning of a war against art, a war that derived from the deep-rooted conviction that the Jewish concept of art had to be different from that of the rest of the world, just as our faith and our passage through history were different. . . . Year after year, I received blows and dealt them. I learned that to defeat art you have to use its own arsenal, transforming language and character. But at bottom I fooled no one, neither the dedicated priests in the temple of art nor myself. For me the war would never end until—with or without the vessels of art—I could see before my eyes the full vision of my spiritual journey in the modern world, just as my great-grandfather saw his spiritual journey through his world. . . . Perhaps a later generation will attribute more significance to my stubborn journey toward the unachieved than to my clumsy blundering.

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ON THE HORIZON

MEN AND HISTORY

The Tragic Visions of Pasternak and Silone

WILLIAM PHILLIPS

"DR. ZHIVAGO," by Boris Pasternak, the work of a remarkable unpolitical writer who somehow managed to survive Russian history, and *The Secret of Luca,* the new novel by the important European political writer Ignazio Silone, have so much to do with the state of the world as well as that of literature that it is difficult to approach them simply as works of art. Many of the reviewers of *Dr. Zhivago* have written about it as though it were primarily a weapon in the cold war; and the effect of the book goes far beyond its literary appeal. As for *The Secret of Luca,* whose implications are not so fashionable or newsworthy, for they stir up questions about our own morality, it has to be read as a political fable as well as a novel.

Both novels have basically the same theme, the invasion of man's moral and intellectual being by the gendarmerie of power that attaches itself to and acts in the name of history, justice, equality; and both of them take their meaning from the fate of the socialist and Communist movements in the West as well as behind the iron curtain. Silone, however, has taken the dilemma out of politics and generalized it into a conflict between personal ethics and the laws of expediency. Pasternak, on the other hand, has written what amounts to a saga of the Russian Revolution, but the narrative, large and sprawling like the events themselves, actually describes the destruction of the Western culture-hero, whose precarious combination of integrity, sensibility, and idealism is constantly threatened by the philistines and the barbarians.

Tolstoyan influences have been noted in *Dr. Zhivago,* and there are clear parallels with Tolstoy's historical imagination. But I find a more interesting counterpart to *The Magic Mountain:* the symbolic structure and conception of the hero in *Dr. Zhivago* follow a pattern similar to that of Mann's novel, except that it seems to be turned inside out. In *The Magic Mountain* the stage was set apart from "reality," but on it were reenacted the ideas and motives of the world below; and before Hans Castorp, "the man of the middle," could go down again to find his right place, he had to be lifted to a higher level of consciousness, mainly by the debates between Naphta and Settembrini who represent the two modern forces, democratic humanism and elite authoritarianism. In *Dr. Zhivago* we see the process in reverse. The scene of the action is in the real world, while the ideal one exists in the memory and consciousness of the protagonist himself, Dr. Zhivago. And the figure of Dr. Zhivago is also a kind of reversal of Hans Castorp, the average man with the unusual experience; for Pasternak's hero, whose life is quite ordinary, is unique in the purity of his mind. If Dr. Zhivago is not a genius in his own right, he at least stands for the values of genius, that is to say, the values of art and truth, and his tragedy is not merely that he is trampled on by the exigencies of the revolution, but that his qualities are not

"DR. ZHIVAGO" as a work of literature rather than a topic of the cold war is here discussed by WILLIAM PHILLIPS. Along with it, he examines the latest book by a leading political novelist of modern times, Ignazio Silone. Mr. Phillips is an editor of *Partisan Review* and an occasional contributor to this magazine.

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even recognized by the new plebeianism. Where Hans Castorp, reflecting Mann's concern with the tension between the creative man and middle-class society, is destroyed in the act of taking his place in the world, Dr. Zhivago on the other hand dies a lonely man, part of the human debris left behind by the sweep of the revolution. Between the two novels, *Dr. Zhivago* and *The Magic Mountain,* lies the failure of the socialist revolution in Russia.

The story of Dr. Zhivago is told through a series of episodes from pre-revolutionary days, when we first see him as a boy in Czarist Russia, through the civil war, during most of which he is almost literally a captive of the revolution as he is detached from his family and forced by the Bolsheviks to serve as a doctor. The immediate pathos of the novel is that of a dislocated man, who, however complex his ideological relation to the revolution, cannot become meaningfully involved in it except as a doctor, that is to say, as a technician; and, significantly, toward the end he tries to conceal even the fact that he is a doctor. Zhivago has only two passions that fully engage him, his love for Lara, which is his most selfless human tie, and his writing, which fulfills the aesthetic needs of his own being. But both his love and his writing are amateurish and fortuitous, as though to suggest that his dislocation is so profound as to permit no genuine commitments.

Though the fate of Zhivago seems to be an integral part of the revolutionary story, as the two are woven together in a straightforward, evenly paced narrative, they are actually two separate forces, each having its own life and meaning. Zhivago is the pre-Communist—or non-Communist—man, and everything that happens to him might be taken as a parable of the unpolitical, creative mind that is opposed to the revolution not on doctrinal grounds but simply because it wants to remain what it is, or as Pasternak might put it, to realize the form of life appropriate to its own content. The revolution, on the other hand, as Pasternak conceives it, is simply part of history; and he has an organic idea of history, reminiscent of earlier cyclic theories, according to which history has its own laws and is biologically self-contained. If it feeds on humanity as it goes through its ceaseless transformations, there is also the hope that an equilibrium favorable to man might sometime be reached.

Theoretically, these attitudes toward history and politics are not impressive, and if they were advanced outside the novel, we would surely be critical of the fuzziness and the teleological implications of Pasternak's notion of history and of a political position that has no perspective beyond the preservation of certain intellectual and human qualities.

As for Pasternak's stand on Soviet society, it is philosophical rather than political. He is naturally critical of the lies, the opportunism, the bureaucracy, the mediocrity, but he does not touch on most of the political questions about the nature of the regime that have been raised outside the Soviet Union; nor does he propound any alternative system, unless, of course, we assume it to be implicit in his Christian views of men and history. It is indeed difficult to piece together all the popular theories—and prejudices—in the areas of religion, philosophy, and politics, that have found their way in somewhat scrambled form into *Doctor Zhivago.* The simple fact is that Pasternak has only an academic awareness of modern ideas and movements; hence he reaches back into earlier myths and traditions to get outside the enveloping Soviet ideology. And this kind of reversion, it seems to me, would account for much of the 19th-century flavor of the novel, including its rather simple but authentic love of country.

Perhaps the most unacceptable ideas in the novel relate to the role of the Jews, who apparently contribute to their own persecution by persisting in the right to exist. "It's so strange," says one of the characters, "that these people . . . should be incapable of liberating themselves from their loyalty to an obsolete, ante-diluvian identity." The isolation of the Jews, which he characterizes as "shame-faced" and "self-denying," comes partly, he adds, "from a kind of inner senility, a historical centuries-long weariness. I don't like their ironical whistling in the dark, their prosaic, limited outlook, the timidity of their imagination." And at another point in the novel it is argued that the existence of the Jews has been anticlimactic ever since their one great contribution to humanity, namely, Christianity.

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Now, it must be said that in themselves these pronouncements are of course gross, and represent a mélange of myth, theory, and prejudice. Clearly, Pasternak's opinions on the Jewish question come from such widely different sources as Christian attitudes, Russian nationalism, and folk legend, as well as the socialist tradition, whose assimilationist tendencies, however, are to be distinguished from simple anti-Semitism. And, so far as I know, Pasternak in his personal life chose to live outside the Jewish intellectual community and to assume the identity of a non-Jew. Many questions are raised by Pasternak's repudiation of Judaism or of his own Jewishness, but these are only marginal to the meaning of the novel; and we should not permit them to obscure the many heroic literary and political implications of the writing of *Doctor Zhivago*. Besides, we might perhaps, with some humility and charity, appreciate the intellectual plight of a man who in his recoil from historical brutality had to clutch at the *remnants* of old ideologies, as though he were reconstructing a mind that had been destroyed. Nor do these ideologies take a programmatic form in the novel; they serve merely as a kind of desperate and nostalgic perspective for the tragedy of Doctor Zhivago.

It seems to me that the political interest of Dr. Zhivago lies not in its philosophy, but rather in its confrontation of history by a writer of unquestionable genius and integrity. We should not forget that Pasternak, writing and thinking as an insider, is a unique figure, almost a miraculous one, with no tradition to draw on for his particular kind of dissent, and that only the peculiar and momentary turn of events which led to the thaw made this novel at all possible. But here it is, and we might take *Dr. Zhivago* to be symptomatic of the underground mood of the Soviet intelligentsia that has so far found only one expression and probably begins to turn in on itself before it is permitted to reach any kind of clarity or authenticity. And this, I think, gives the novel its primary value as a human and historical document.

Sometimes such a document, through the juxtaposition of genius and decisive historical events, can become a literary masterpiece. For both formal and ideological reasons, however, *Dr. Zhivago* falls short of such achievement. The mode of narration is too casual, too episodic, too low-pitched for so large a theme. The opening section, which provides the pre-revolutionary background, reads too much like a slow, introductory sketch; after that the novel picks up speed, but it is still lacking in the kind of organizing energy needed to fuse theme and story and take them out of the realm of pure narrative. Pasternak's prose is difficult to judge in translation, but here, too, there is some lack of fictional power as the writing seems to linger over each phrase to give it a poetic exactness. Nor does *Dr. Zhivago* present a new vision, beyond a nostalgia for the human that is not devoid of hope. One is also tempted to speculate about the kind of intellectual restriction under which the novel was written. Certainly I have the feeling that Pasternak did not let go; this is difficult to establish, but I am struck by such things as the plaintive and introspective mood, the narrow range of the action, the failure to push the development of the characters to their psychological limits (including the almost total absence of sensuality), and a general sense of restraint throughout the novel. The appeal of the novel lies elsewhere: in the remarkable sensibility and clarity of observation Pasternak brings to his story and in the essential tragedy of his predicament. The book may not be a great novel, but it is undoubtedly the work of a great man.

UNLIKE Pasternak, Silone does not have a ready-made historical panorama to house his theme. All he has is a reading of modern events. In addition, Silone has always been drawn to the pastoral tale as a vehicle for his moral and political ideas. Hence his new novel, *The Secret of Luca*, seems like a model, very much reduced in scale, of the general human condition. In this respect, it resembles Silone's first work, *Fontamara*, the least complicated and most moving of his novels; and it might appear that Silone is returning full circle to a form of narrative simplification. But there are important differences between *Fontamara* and *The Secret of Luca:* where the meanings of the earlier work were fairly explicit and presented a direct, socialist image of economic exploitation, the latest novel is much more oblique and is concerned with moral rather than economic injustice. In this regard *The*

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Secret of Luca is more Christian than socialist.

The moral hero—and physical victim—of *The Secret of Luca* is an old man whose life has been spent in a gesture of defiance, a defiance of all those who would break down the distinction between what is public and what is private. At the opening of the novel, Luca returns to his native village after having spent forty years in jail for a crime he did not commit. His innocence could easily have been established if he had been willing to reveal that the time of the murder was the moment—and the only one—of consummation of a long, morbid, passion between Luca and a married woman he had briefly courted as a young man. And it is the unearthing of this simple fact, buried in the memories of a few frightened people, that makes up the body of the novel. As Andrea, an incorruptible man who sets out to investigate what happened, brings to light more and more of the truth, Luca undergoes a process of moral rehabilitation, until at the end he comes out a saintly figure, whose tight-lipped honesty acts as an antidote to the windy rhetoric of the town's leading citizens.

Taken literally, Luca's failure to save himself might be said to be foolish, since his secret involved nothing worse than adultery, and besides, his mistress went mad and found refuge in a convent. But, of course, any principle can be reduced to absurdity if taken literally enough. And the principle here is simply the defense of personal integrity against abstract rules of justice and historical necessity. In this respect, Silone's attitudes may be said to reflect the political history of our age. Like so many other writers, particularly in Europe, who had once supported the Communists, Silone has maintained his belief in the most basic socialist ideals, but he now questions the uses of power to attain them. In his present phase, Silone is most concerned with the sanctity of the individual, having learned the lesson that human safeguards are to be found in the authenticity of individual men rather than in the movements dedicated to mankind. Thus Silone would seem to be against all ideologies; yet he has actually been drawn to such "ideologies" as anarchism and Christianity, in each case of a rather primitive and pastoral variety. If the hero of *The Secret of Luca* is a saint, he is a throwback to the ascetic virtues of the early Christians.

I suppose Silone's position sounds at times like a collection of political homilies. But, after all, a preoccupation with goodness and truth as the basis for human association is bound to be less exciting than some sweeping theory of social change. In fact, the substitution of moral for political issues has had much to do with the waning of political enthusiasm in recent years. Still, in the case of Silone, it is not so much his precepts as his example that moves us, and it must be said that in an era ruled by compromise Silone's principled stand is most admirable.

As for the novel itself, it is a tribute to Silone's artistry that the rural innocence and charm with which he tells the story is entirely in keeping with the homespun wisdom embodied in the character of Luca. But *The Secret of Luca* does not have the singleness of effect that made a novel like *Fontamara* so memorable, and this, I should say, is because the symbolism of *The Secret of Luca* has a narrative instead of an intellectual reality, so that while it works as a story, it does not overwhelm us with its meaning.

IT IS certainly a piece of historical irony that the best political novel in recent years—and one of the most important novels of any genre—should have come out of that artistic wasteland, the Soviet Union. The most obvious explanation for what seems like a creative miracle lies in the fact that a writer of Pasternak's genius and strength was alive at the time of the thaw, which brought not only some relaxation of party control of the arts but also carried for the Soviet intelligentsia the hope of further liberalization. In addition, however, such a work as *Dr. Zhivago* could have come only out of a genuine involvement in the political events of our time and in their moral and intellectual consequences. The political novel in the West, associated with figures like Malraux, Koestler, and Silone in his first phase, belongs to an earlier period. In recent years novelists in Europe and in this country have shied away from political subjects: and quite naturally, as the political situation has had little imaginative appeal for intellectuals, nor has there been any theory or movement to engage their political

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idealism. Respectable politics today rarely go beyond the cold war, which is really a pseudonym for stalemate; and the effect has been to discourage not only the responsibility of genuine politics but also the irresponsibility of art, both of which were always necessary in the past for the large gestures of affirmation and dissent. And this, it seems to me, is the importance of these two different books: Silone's small, impractical voice asserts the primacy of the moral act, while Pasternak's Promethean defiance of history is made in the name of nothing more stable than human creativity.

PREMONITION AT TWILIGHT

PHILIP LEVINE

The magpie in the Joshua tree
Has come to rest. Darkness collects
And what I cannot hear or see,
Broken limbs, the curious bird,
Become in darkness darkness too.
I had been going when I heard
The sound of something called the night,
I had been going but I stopped
To see the bird restrain his flight;
The bird in place, the shadows dropped
As if they waited in the light
Before I came, for centuries,
For something I could never see,
And what it was became itself,
And then the bird, and then the tree;
And then the force behind the breeze
Became at last the whole of me.

Philip Levine here makes his first contribution to Commentary. His verse and reviews have appeared in numerous other periodicals, among them *Paris Review, Poetry,* and *Epoch*. Mr. Levine was born in Detroit, but now lives in Fresno, California.

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THE STUDY OF MAN

ARISTOCRACY IN AMERICA

Who Are Philadelphia's "Best Families"?

SEYMOUR MARTIN LIPSET

AMERICAN sociology has become the most omnivorous of all the social sciences. It has set itself the task of systematically investigating the operations of contemporary society, in much the same fashion, and with similar theoretical conceptions, as the biological sciences seek to investigate the structure and function of living organisms. How far sociology has succeeded in fulfilling this large ambition should not be left to the experts to judge, but I think there can be little doubt that until now it has failed to deal adequately with one major problem: the interrelations of power and upper-class status in egalitarian and democratic America. I am happy to report that the work under review promises to meet part of this need. *Philadelphia Gentlemen,* by E. Digby Baltzell, says important things about class and power in America, and says it in ways that will interest and fascinate laymen as well as sociologists.

Baltzell's most important thesis is that the United States is developing an upper class comparable in many ways to the aristocracies of the old world. Characterized by descent from old wealth, an Anglo-Saxon ethnic background, membership in the Episcopalian church, education at a private boarding school and then at Princeton, Yale, or Harvard, membership in the Somerset, Knickerbocker, or Philadelphia clubs—it is this class which also, in Philadelphia at least, controls the major sectors of the economy; by its combination of high social status and economic wealth it possesses tremendous community power. Evidence of this is the fact that the Philadelphia *Social Register,* a book in which the *nouveaux riches,* no matter how wealthy, find no place, "listed, with certain ethnic exceptions, almost all the most powerful bankers and businessmen in the city in 1940."

Upper-class gentility is always based on inherited wealth, but as the abundant statistical and qualitative data presented here make clear, the genteel wealthy upper class do not spend their time on "conspicuously consuming leisure-time activities"—activities which they leave to the newly rich and their scions—but rather continue to emphasize "the 'Protestant ethic' of hard work and a mistrust, amounting almost to an incapacity, for leisure." And consistent with this analysis, Baltzell suggests that the members of the Philadelphia *Social Register* do not exhibit any of the "other-directed" traits which, according to David Riesman (who, ironically enough, is the son of the first Jewish member of that august body), characterize the American middle and upper classes.

In stressing the links between an upper-class subculture and power, Baltzell does not agree with C. Wright Mills in seeing America as fallen under the sway of an interlocking directorate of power-oriented leaders who seek to further class or clique self-interest. Rather does he see power and stratification as inherent aspects of every complex social system. And with Tocqueville he suggests that the existence of an aristocratic class and culture permits power to be used more, rather than less, re-

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SEYMOUR MARTIN LIPSET, who has previously appeared in this department, is co-author (with Reinhard Bendix) of *Social Mobility in an Industrial Society,* just released by the University of California Press. Here he discusses E. Digby Baltzell's *Philadelphia Gentlemen* (Free Press, 440 pp., $5.75). Mr. Lipset is with the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford, California.

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sponsibly: "In the last analysis, power over other people is the indispensable mark of high social status, and the primary function of an upper class is the exercise of power. . . . An upper class must maintain the power of leadership in order to limit the power of individual leaders. . . . Among other things, a sense of honor and morality, and even a sense of *noblesse oblige*, serves to check the abuses of power."

Philadelphia Gentlemen analyzes the development of the upper-class culture in America: the emergence of elite private schools such as Groton, which after 1900 play a part comparable to Eton and Harrow in Britain; the gradual centralization of upper-class education in a few universities; the growing exclusiveness of upper-class social clubs; the codification of upper-class membership in the *Social Register;* the conversion of old high-status families to Episcopalianism. All of these developments may be seen as ways by which those who "have" seek to hand on their privileges to their descendants, and there is no question that this is what indeed happens. The creation of one upper class whose members share a common background and values, however, serves to create a class of power holders who can be disciplined for violation of the code by their status peers.

It is possible to discover many advantages in the existence of a privileged, more or less hereditary, upper class. In a bureaucratic society, as Max Weber pointed out many years ago, the successful climb the ladder of government or industry by conforming to the desires of their superiors. Hence bureaucratic success requires unimaginative conformity, whereas those who are born to high status enjoy the freedom to please themselves and to experiment and innovate. The *nouveau riche* entrepreneur is likely to view all who stand in the way of his maximizing a profit, whether they be workers, competitors, or governments, as obstacles to be removed by any possible means, including the use of anti-labor thugs or financial support of unscrupulous political opportunists, behavior which those bred to lead will regard as dishonorable. And as Robert Sherwood has indicated, history exemplifies "the principle that the men who inherit, or easily gain, their power are less likely to intensify it at the expense of society than those men who have struggled for it in the service of a burning ideal." As evidence for these propositions, Baltzell cites the fact that "the upper class in Philadelphia has, on the whole, fostered an atmosphere of integrity and honesty within the business community," and that "it is traditional in America that the gentlemen of means and position support the rights of those less privileged than themselves, often in opposition to the privileged class that bred them."

From his analysis of the growth of a national upper class characterized by almost castelike patterns, Baltzell comes to his ultimate conclusion: the emergence of an American aristocracy strengthens freedom and reform. The scions of a business aristocracy are increasingly finding that business is not the most satisfying way of fulfilling their leadership role, particularly since government rather than business has become the center of effective power. But those who seek to lead in politics and government choose a path which is repugnant to the conservative and business community. Hence, Baltzell suggests, it is no accident that in recent years "the political leaders who came from upper-class backgrounds tended to be Democrats rather than Republicans; they were deviants in a predominantly Republican and business-oriented subculture." In Philadelphia since World War II, the city has been going through a "cultural, civic, and political renaissance" under the aegis of a revived liberal Democratic party, which has been led by two members of the upper class, Richard Dilworth and Joseph Sill Clark. The local chapter of Americans for Democratic Action, led by another Social Registerite, John Frederick Lewis, Jr., has played a major role in this upheaval, and it includes many men whose names also figure in the *Social Register*. And among those who may lead the Democratic party back to the White House in 1960 are "Adlai Stevenson of Choate School and Princeton, G. Mennen Williams of Salisbury School and Princeton, John F. Kennedy of Choate and Harvard . . . and Averell Harriman of Groton and Yale."

The view of upper-class norms and institutions presented here stands in refreshing contrast to the now dominant sociological conceptions of W. Lloyd Warner and C. Wright Mills. Warner, ignoring the power functions of high social status, accepts at face value the stress placed on manners and family background as the main source of class differentiation. Mills, on the other hand, dismisses these aspects of the class structure as epiphenomena and sees

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only a self-interested and exploitative "power-elite." It is perhaps no accident that these two perspectives, one of uncritical emulative acceptance, and the other sharply hostile, are the views of two men whose own social origins place them outside the upper class, while the book under review is by a sociologist who has lived closely with the members of the Philadelphia social elite all his life. One lesson perhaps to be drawn from this study is that the common assumption that an outsider always sees more clearly than an insider is not necessarily true.

THERE is a number of questions about the American upper-class behavior to which one may hope that Mr. Baltzell will turn in future work. Much of the statistical data in the volume do not go past 1940. Baltzell explains this on the ground that many structural changes occurring in America that might affect the patterns described here "waited for the close of World War II to assert themselves," such as the decline of occupations and industries which were traditional centers of upper-class dominance, e.g. investment banking, and the decline of local ties and family prestige with the concomitant growth of "the new corporate feudalism." He asserts that modern war, e.g. that of 1940-45—and one might add prolonged postwar prosperity—are "productive of new elites and new family fortunes." But if this is so, it may call many of the findings of the book into question. We surely want to know whether we are reading a book about a declining or an emerging pattern. There is, in fact, some statistical evidence which suggests that the pattern documented here no longer obtains. Baltzell, for example, reports a secular decline in the rate of growth of the *Social Register*. Only 6 per cent new families were added to the list between 1930 and 1940, as contrasted with 31 per cent between 1910 and 1920.

At the same time that the *Social Register* has become more and more limited to those with the "right" family background, it would seem that the proportion of the business elite who secured their eminence through inheritance is constantly declining, and there has even been an increase in the proportion of business leaders of working-class origin over the past two generations—this fact has been independently documented by Reinhard Bendix, Suzanne Keller, and W. Lloyd Warner. Thus if Bendix, Keller, and Warner are right, the economic power of the *Social Register* in the nation as a whole must be lessening. These differences between Baltzell's conclusions and those suggested by the analyses of the composition of the business elite may be a function, as Baltzell suggests, of changes since 1940, or they may reflect the fact that the upper-class structure of Philadelphia is atypical. Dennis Brogan, one of the leading British authorities on American society, wrote in the early 1940's that an aristocratic upper-class pattern can only be found in the economically declining cities in the United States; he specifically mentioned Boston, Charleston, and Philadelphia as such cities. Where new major industries, head offices, or population are flocking (New York City, Washington, California, Texas), power also goes. In those places, however, one would expect the upper class to be weak.

The assumption that an increasingly solidified and exclusive American upper class is characterized by greater security, honor, and *noblesse oblige*, is also open to question. In the late 19th century James Bryce called attention to the fact that upper-class Americans showed greater concern with social origins of potential intimates than did comparable upper-class Britons. Brogan made the same comment about pre-World War II America and Britain, and very recently Howard Brotz, a young American sociologist who spent several years studying the Jewish community in Britain, pointed to the same variation in snobbery of upper classes on both sides of the Atlantic as perhaps helping to explain why wealthy English Jews are much more readily accepted by wealthy English Gentiles than are comparably situated American Jews by their Gentile peers. In each case, Bryce, Brogan, and Brotz argue that the extensive efforts of upper-class Americans to develop strong status barriers of family origins, exclusive schools and clubs, restricted neighborhoods, and so forth, actually reflects the insecurity of *nouveaux riches*, or more accurately of an upper class living in a country in which the very notion of ascriptive privilege violates one of the key cultural values, that of equality of opportunity. In effect, it is suggested that a genuinely aristocratic upper class would not bar Jews or acceptable *nouveaux riches* from their homes, social clubs, or college fraternities. A class which is really secure in its status can not be declassed by contact with those of lowly background. Those characterized by true

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noblesse oblige would never offend others' feelings by excluding them. In spite of Baltzell's penetrating analysis of American upper-class behavior, I am still left wondering whether a genuine upper class can exist in the United States as long as egalitarianism remains one of the key aspects of our value system. And if it is true that inherited class position will always feel itself threatened in America, then the tendencies toward aristocracy documented in this study may continue to cause conflict and strain since they not only produce Franklin Roosevelts, Dilworths, Clarks, and Stevensons but also throw up Archibald Roosevelts who back McCarthy and Elliott and John Roosevelts who become Republicans.

All this points up what is for me Baltzell's one major deficiency—his failure to deal with the continued vitality of the value of egalitarianism in America, and its effect on American upper-class life. From the foreign travelers of the early 19th century to the contemporary émigrés from Eastern Europe interviewed by Bogdan Raditsa,* high status Europeans in America have noted with surprise that Americans are reluctant to defer to others solely because of family background, wealth, or occupation. The constant tendency toward aristocracy has always been countered by egalitarianism, and by large-scale social mobility. There can be little doubt that America is developing something like an elite Establishment resembling Great Britain; but it is an Establishment which resembles the new, more open British one rather than the old aristocratic institution that died between 1940 and 1950. If I am right, this means that while the *Social Register* will remain a fairly exclusive body with membership limited to those with proper ancestry, its members will pay much less attention to the family backgrounds of those with whom they associate than did their parents. Some evidence for these changes may be found in postwar Democratic Philadelphia, where the young scions of the *Social Register* mingle at social, political, and intellectual gatherings with minority group, especially Jewish, professionals whom they have met at the meetings of ADA or other community welfare-minded organizations.

*See "Clash of Two Immigrant Generations," COMMENTARY, January 1958.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

The Puritan Consensus & Ours

To the Editor of Commentary:

Were John Cotton still alive, he would prepare an answer to Professor Boorstin's "The Puritan Tradition" (October) which your readers would long remember. Perhaps the minister's comment on an earlier occasion will suffice: "There is another combination of virtues strangely mixed in every lively, holy Christian: and that is, diligence in worldly businesses, and yet deadness to the world. Such a mystery as none can read but they that know it." One is forced to conclude that Professor Boorstin's search for continuities in American history has led him to miss this central point in New England Puritanism. Not ideas devoid of practical application, not practice whose theory is mere rationalization, but a permeation of action by thought was the Puritan ideal. The Professor suggests this when he speaks of "applied theology": he then unfortunately dismisses the theology in order to concentrate on the application.

At the root of this "practical" interpretation lies a misconception which may be described as a false analogy between the religious orthodoxy of the Puritans and the secular consensus of our own day. Our consensus is a rather comforting community of beliefs which serve as a source of personal and social stability; the Puritan consensus was an agreement upon the impossibility of stability outside of heaven. The Puritan diaries (which Professor Boorstin omits from his list of New England literary forms) bear abundant witness to the agonies of soul felt by men whose consensus dictated a belief in the damnation of the many and the salvation of the few, in the impossibility of determining absolutely whether one was saved, in the inevitability and vileness of sin, in the coming of the millennium. In this light, it hardly seems possible to say, as Professor Boorstin does, "American Puritans were hardly more distracted from their practical tasks by theology and metaphysics than we are today." The American consensus has not always been a comforter of doubts.

Closely related to this error is Professor Boorstin's overemphasis on "community" and "community-building." Although the Puritans are chosen by God as a people, they nevertheless stand before the Supreme Judge as individuals. . . . Again the Puritan covenant is not our consensus; it is not a means of overcoming one's isolation, but a means of facing it.

In short, had Professor Boorstin described the Puritan venture as a series of failures, he would have had John Cotton's profound assent —Cotton, who upbraided his people time and again for their failure to attain the ideal of walking, as Perry Miller says, the razor's edge between this world and the next. But Professor Boorstin says instead that the "real" purpose of American Puritanism was "community-building," and that the movement was therefore a success. Its goal was rather the permeation of action by ideas, and its failure is also our failure.

Richard E. Rubenstein
Harvard University
Cambridge, Mass.

Education in a Democracy

To the Editor of Commentary:

Professor Bettelheim, in his article on "Sputnik and Segregation" (October), states that "all too often the same people who insist that all men are equal (and hence fight against segregation *according to race*) claim just as heatedly that some are more equal—and hence demand a different type of schooling for the gifted."

If the fight against segregation is based on the belief that "all men are equal," it surely is lost. Men are not equal. Reasonable people oppose segregation because it involves an *irrelevant* discrimination—an inequality that is unwarranted. I discriminate among my students. I give good grades to those who do good work, etc. . . . And my discrimination is justified insofar as it is relevant; it would be objectionable if irrelevant—if, e.g., I handed out grades according to race or religion. Now the distinction between gifted and ungifted is educationally relevant. Therefore one may oppose irrelevant discrimination (e.g. racial discrimination in schools) just because one favors relevant discrimination (e.g. higher tasks set for the more gifted—which implies separation). Professor Bettelheim sees an inconsistency only because he seems to feel that all discrimination is bad—which is absurd.

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Professor Bettelheim goes on to say that the gifted, in his observation, are better off—they develop more originality—when not separated from the less gifted. I have not noted that the separation which is made early in Europe has led to less individualism and original thought than in America where no such separation takes place. . . . Most observers agree that giving the gifted child no higher tasks than the ungifted child has not led to originality and independence. On the contrary . . . the non-separation compels the gifted to compete with the ungifted in terms shaped by the latter!

Finally, Professor Bettelheim raises the specter of the European class system, perpetuated in his opinion through the multiple-track educational system. . . . He forgets to mention that it was not the separation of gifted from ungifted that might have led to greater differences in opportunity than exist in the United States, but the very simple fact that the children of the lower classes in Europe could not afford extended schooling. The son of the worker, gifted or ungifted, had to go to work: not so in the United States, where most children can afford to graduate from high school. Separate curricula would result not in a division of social classes, but in adapting the teaching to the differently gifted children.

Perhaps [an acceptable] case could be made against the separation of the gifted from the less gifted children. . . . But Professor Bettelheim has not made it.

ERNEST VAN DEN HAAG

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The two problems so lightly lumped together in Bruno Bettelheim's article are really quite unrelated. . . . The [only] problem that is at issue is whether we should provide special education for *all* the gifted children, regardless of race, creed, national origin. . . .

Now it is well known that children differ in mental ability, in rate of growth, emotional makeup, religious beliefs, home cultural background, and in scores of other ways. It is in the essence of democracy that these differences are not permitted to give unfair political advantage to any group of citizens over any other group. However, the existence of these wide individual differences among children inevitably requires that we individualize instruction to meet those different developmental needs. Our democratic ideal, therefore, recognizes the different potentials of different children by offering each child the opportunity for maximum development of his capabilities.

Professor Bettelheim opposes special and separate education for the gifted as a divisive measure that isolates them from their peers. But he proposes that we provide special schools for the underprivileged from ages five to seven, to try to overcome the preliminary disadvantages from which they suffer. However, does anyone believe that even if all underprivileged five-year-olds could be brought up to the average level of their peers by age seven (and this is questionable) they would thenceforth progress at the same rate? Or that this two-year preparation period would wipe out all the individual differences of mental ability, health, growth, physical development; of emotional and social adjustment; of home environment and economic deprivation? Of course not. The fact is that as soon as these children are thrown together, some will inevitably forge ahead, while others, quite as inevitably, lag behind. Is it proposed that we lock-step all children regardless of their individual capacities and needs and compel them to travel together at the rate of the *slowest* among them? . . . The facts show that gifted children exposed to "easy" education develop poorly. Unmotivated, some become bored and turn into disciplinary problems. Many, including large numbers of our most talented high school graduates, acquire poor attitudes toward learning in general and lose ambition for higher education, as numerous studies have revealed. What we need is the utmost in individualized instruction and guidance. . . .

Here in New York City we are trying to solve the problem in many ways. One of these is the special experimental program at Junior High School 43, Manhattan, organized for the purpose of identifying and developing the talented among the "underprivileged" portion of the population. These youngsters are getting special training and special guidance in a program that extends right through the senior high school. A concentrated effort is being made to achieve the highest educational function of our democracy—to develop each child to the highest level of his potential.

We recognize the need for special educational programs for the slow learner, the physically handicapped, the newly arrived immigrant, the child who wishes to learn a vocation. Nor does anyone seem to object to the special facilities provided for them. Why become alarmed when it is proposed to provide special educational facilities for the gifted, who have been the most neglected members of our schools? We must put an end to the waste of human talent represented by them. . . .

ALEXANDER TAFFEL
Principal

The Bronx High School of Science
New York City

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

The Thought of Conservative Judaism

TRADITION AND CHANGE: THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM. Edited by MORDECAI WAXMAN. Burning Bush Press. 477 pp. $4.50.

Reviewed by MILTON HIMMELFARB

A CERTAIN husband decides the major questions: whether Red China should be admitted to the UN and whether the testing of nuclear weapons should be suspended; his wife decides the minor questions: where they will live and how many children they will have. In Conservative Judaism the rabbinate is like that husband and the laity like that wife.

This book, a selected record of dealings with the major questions, appears at a rather odd time. When the Rabbinical Assembly directed that a volume should be published to illustrate the thinking of the most eminent men associated with the Conservative movement—or tendency, as some preferred to call it until the 1930's—it was responding to the dissatisfaction of many of its members with the movement's lack of definition and clear principles. One reason for the dissatisfaction was that Orthodoxy and Reform could denounce Conservatism as vague, inconsistent, and opportunist. Yet by the time the Assembly got around to having *Tradition and Change* published, both the external pressure and the internal desire had weakened.

Externally, the Conservatives were better able than ever to use the *tu quoque* argument against their critics, since current Reform practice and doctrine are a mishmash and since in Orthodoxy there are such unorthodox doings as Modern Orthodoxy—similar terms used to be applied to Conservatism—and Traditionalism. Internally, some of the rabbis had lost their old hope that definition and clarification would answer their problems. They had been disillusioned by the failure of some modifications of Jewish law, which they had fought for long and hard, to make any difference in how their people acted or felt. They also were affected by Marshall Sklare's *Conservative Judaism* (1955), which showed that what the rabbis think and say does not matter much to their congregations; the rabbis had known this all along, but to see it in print, documented and established, was chilling.

Sklare is an unseen presence in the editor's introduction and notes: it isn't true that we are mere role players, Rabbi Waxman finds himself retorting to "those who have analyzed Conservative Judaism from the outside," and the questions we decide are really major questions. It may be, too, that some of the candor about relations among the rabbinical right, center, and left and among the institutions of the movement is similarly due to Sklare—not that he had anything to teach a working rabbi about those relations, but that after his book an insider need not worry about telling secrets.

Tradition and Change does not—it could not—purport to define and clarify Conservative principles. What it does, and does very well, is to reproduce, introduce, and annotate documents, nearly all interesting and some impressive, by a number of scholars and rabbis (and Henrietta Szold), many of them truly distinguished: notably, among the dead, Zacharias Frankel, Alexander Kohut, Solomon Schechter, Israel Friedlander, and Louis Ginzberg, and among the living, Mordecai Kaplan and Louis Finkelstein. The documents are sermons, speeches, articles, statements, and responsa. They show what the intellectual forerunners of Conservative Judaism were reacting against and working for, and they give a good sample of the range of more contemporary thinking on belief and observance and on the goals and organization of the Conservative movement; on Zionism, Jewish education, and the Jewish community the range is narrower. There is nothing about social action. The Conservative rabbis have a committee and pass resolutions, but usually, like the Orthodox, they agree tacitly that social action is the

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business of the Reform rabbis, together with nearly everything else that enters into being an ambassador to the Gentiles.

Two recurrent ideas in the literature of the Conservative movement seem to be so compelling for the rabbis that even dissenters are sometimes apt to forget themselves and appeal to their authority. Reduced to slogans, as they often are, those ideas are "life is stronger than logic" and "evolution, not revolution." Apart from any inherent force they may have, they are what may be expected, as an answer to external criticism and internal uneasiness, of a movement that is centrist, diverse, eclectic, and thriving.

Rabbi Waxman writes: "People who labored on the Sabbath could not bring themselves to discard their hats in the synagogue. Men and women who stayed away from the synagogue throughout the year wanted the *shul* they stayed away from to be a *shul* where people *davvened*"—and so on. Moreover, these things "are as true of members of Conservative congregations in 1958 as they were in 1910. . . . Custom is stronger than law, and life is stronger than logic." Hence the typical Conservative combination: covered heads and a traditional service, but also the organ and mixed seating. Hence too the synagogue center —the *shul* with a pool, in the private language of the Conservative rabbinate. All of this has been very successful. But rabbis are intellectuals, or some of them are, and intellectuals are rather less certain than businessmen that you can't argue with success. And many rabbis must be less sure than Rabbi Waxman that the second-generation nostalgias and dislikes that have long supported Conservatism can still be relied on.

"Evolution, not revolution" was originally used against Reform radicalism. Its weaknesses today are spectacular. It can be made to mean just about anything, which is a virtue only for propagandists, and it is untrue to the life invoked by "life is stronger than logic," because the revolution has taken place. More than a century ago, in Germany, some Jewish scholars borrowed the doctrine from the arguments of the conservative historians against the French Revolution and its extension. It is a warning against a sharp break with historical tradition—revolution. But the break, the revolution, is now part of our personal and communal history, and therefore of our own tradition. To keep using the slogan is like repeating that Sarajevo must not lead to war. Sarajevo led to war a long time ago.

How are we to explain the Conservative rabbis' readiness to put up with the inconsistencies, contradictions, and ambiguities they have to live with? Those things hurt. One of the ways in which the rabbis try to soothe the hurt, unavailing but revealing, is to change congregations; the Conservative rabbinate is a restless body of men.

The simplest explanation is careerism, since the pay and perquisites are high and nowhere outside the rabbinate does an early, sound Jewish education have a substantial cash value. No doubt the movement has its careerists, but that alone cannot begin to provide the answer. There have been any number of Conservative rabbis who could do better and have an easier life in business or another profession.

I prefer a more ingenuous explanation. The average Conservative rabbi dislikes his job and dislikes the intellectual muddle, but he wants to do something for the classical triad of God, Torah, and Jewish people. That very ambition leads to some of the muddle. Take the conflict between law, *halakhah,* and custom or usage, *minhag.* When a Conservative rabbi uses the life-is-stronger-than-logic argument he may sound happy that Jews who violate the Sabbath venerate a mere custom like covering the head in the synagogue. He is not happy. He was quick to see the point when a Seminary professor, in an address to the Rabbinical Assembly a few years ago, quoted the 18th-century Jacob Emden—if I remember correctly—who said that *minhag* was only an anagram for *ge-Hinnom,* Gehenna. In *Tradition and Change* an imaginary dialogue by Kohut has a Reformer ironically regretting that Moses Isserles, in his notes on the *Shulhan Arukh,* failed to say that it is the *minhag* not to steal; as it is, stealing is only prohibited by the Ten Commandments, so people ignore the prohibition.

But the Conservative rabbi also knows that if a transgressor against the *halakhah* can be kept from being lost to all good (i.e., Conservative rabbinical) influence by his liking for a custom unimportant or even uncouth in itself, that man's children or grandchildren may be helped to go beyond. Schechter's plea to his students was to save—conserve—as much of Judaism as they could. They could not save the Sabbath, so they were glad to see the peo-

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ple save the covered head, hoping that that would keep the door open for restoring the Sabbath later. If most no longer expect restoration, they have not despaired of renewal, less complete but more viable.

Of the old Church of England Dean Inge once wrote that whatever else might be said of it, it provided every parish with a gentleman for its incumbent. Whatever else may be said of Conservative Judaism, it has given as rabbis to its congregations men well trained in a Jewish scholarship of traditional content and scientific method. As Inge said of his gentlemen clergy, in the history of religion there have been worse achievements.

Western Inertia

REFUGEES IN EUROPE, 1957-1958. Report of the Zellerbach Commission on the European Refugee Situation. Published by the Commission. 164 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by OSCAR HANDLIN

THE materials in this document inspire, in the mind of this reviewer, dismal reflections about the general defensiveness and unimaginative inertia of the Western powers vis-à-vis Soviet-controlled Eastern Europe. The stance of our government in recent years has been entirely passive; it meekly awaits the successive blows the Soviets rain upon it and aspires to do no more than ward off disaster. It seems entirely unaware of the cracks in the Iron Curtain that might allow it actually to take the offensive. Otherwise, it would surely have exploited much more forcefully and positively the situation revealed by these documents.

The Zellerbach Commission, consisting of seven distinguished Americans, was created by the International Rescue Committee to survey the condition of European refugees in the hope that the results would draw the attention of the American people to a problem and an opportunity. The members of the Commission traveled through the main centers of refugee settlement in the fall of 1957 and composed their report in the spring of 1958. That report, although it comes to us in a poorly printed, paper-bound volume, is an expressive, even a dramatic, document. The central fact disclosed by it is that the refugee represents a permanent European problem, rather than the lingering by-product of the war that ended fourteen years ago. The Commission was not concerned with the refugees (displaced persons) who were uprooted before 1945, although some of these still have found no permanent home. Its concern was entirely with the refugees compelled to flee to the West since the peace, for a constant stream of fugitives passes into the lands that are still free, and in the spring of 1958 there were fully 160,000 refugees in camps in Western Europe.

Where do all these people come from? In the last year alone, fully 15,000 Yugoslavs escaped across the borders of that country. Other fugitives are in flight from Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and Russia itself. (I leave aside the 170,000 Hungarians who escaped from their country after the putting down of their revolution.) The number of refugees remains large despite the efforts to resettle them because they are constantly being added to. They are evidence of the continued discontent with their rulers of the people who live under Soviet rule.

Just as we missed the opportunity to make anything of the East German uprising or of the Hungarian revolution, so now we remain apathetic toward the problems of these victims of oppression. The refugees are greeted not as allies but as suspects. They are received and interned in concentration camps like that of Valka in Germany, of which the Report gives a graphic account—their first contact with the free world is within the all-too-familiar nightmare context of the concentration camp. It is small wonder that a few turn around and go back. Many more lose hope in the weary months of waiting for acceptance that follow. An opportunity is here tragically being wasted. Suppose the Yugoslav or Polish escapees who look expectantly out at us from the photographs of the Glasenbach and Valka camps were generously welcomed and provided with assistance and guidance to reestablish themselves under conditions that would quickly bring them the rewards of freedom. Could one doubt that the word of their good fortune would soon reach back to the dark world they left behind, bringing a ray of hope to those still there? Forces would be set in motion that would soon enough disquiet their masters.

But that is only a dream. We lack the imagination and the willingness to take the risks that might make it a reality.

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Stuffed Dharma

THE DHARMA BUMS. By JACK KEROUAC. Viking. 244 pp. $3.95.

Reviewed by IRVING FELDMAN

NOT, to my recollection, since the good ship "Lollipop" let fall its praline anchor into the fondant waters of Peppermint Bay has such a cargo of sentimentality been delivered to the waiting world. To judge by his fourth novel, Jack Kerouac has at last managed to find the mountain of solid molasses which was thought to exist somewhere between Hollywood and San Francisco and which not even the combined talents of Heidi, Pollyanna, John Steinbeck, and William Saroyan had been able to locate. And without instruments—his only Geiger counter his heart. I should add that Kerouac has also had the wit to call his molasses mountain "Buddhism."

The "dharma" of the novel's title refers to Buddhist absolute truth or reality, and the "bums" to the early Chinese mendicant philosophers and their contemporary incarnations—the narrator of this novel, Ray Smith (equals Hooray America?), his pal, Japhy Ryder, and their circle of "simple poet bums." They hope, by avoiding the values and uses of middle-class, industrial society, to arrive at dharma; there is also some talk about their setting out as "rucksack wanderers" to proselytize America. And the novel is ostensibly concerned with their visions, meditations, and wanderings, all of which are carried out in the midst of a snug asceticism comfortably padded with Ry-Krisp ("concentrated bread"), salami ("concentrated meat"), peanuts, raisins, rucksacks, straw mats, tea, "gay pots of coffee," "a merry little lodge," nylon ponchos, downy sleeping bags, etc.

All this is treated by Kerouac with an incredible assumed innocence. Japhy Ryder, for example, is the victim of a panegyric equal to anything the greatest hack has yet produced for the greatest hero. One instance will do for the book's several hundred—and will also serve to illustrate Kerouac's schoolboy poster style, witlessly mixed diction, inept use of dialogue for exposition, and unctuous sentimentality:

"A peacefuller scene I never saw than when, in that rather nippy late red afternoon, I simply opened his little door and looked in and saw him at the end of the little shack, sitting crosslegged on a Paisley pillow on a straw mat, with his spectacles on, making him look old and scholarly and wise, with book on lap and the little tin teapot and porcelain cup steaming at his side. He looked up very peacefully, saw who it was, said, 'Ray, come in,' and bent his eyes again to the script.

" 'What you doing?'

" 'Translating Han Shan's great poem called "Cold Mountain" written a thousand years ago some of it scribbled on the sides of cliffs hundreds of miles away from any other living things.'

" 'Wow.' "

The Japhy who emerges from this vaseline bath is one of the less attractive characters in recent fiction. He is quite pompous and a little cruel, his Buddhism seems merely a part of a more general artsy-craftsy Orientalism, and he pursues final wisdom with all the self-righteous, nut-bellied ambition of an old-fashioned Calvinist businessman. Not, indeed, that he is dull to the grosser forms of vanity; his picture of himself is unforgettable: ". . . and I was on Crater Mountain in my jockstrap and boots hunting out ptarmigan nests out of curiosity, climbing and poking about, gettin bit by bees." Ray (that is, Jack himself) is a looser-grained character. Euphoric and footloose, he tags along after the "serious and leaderly" Japhy diddling out tacky little spontaneous poems, complaining of his and the world's unspecified (and unfelt) sufferings, and cooing over everything under the sun. He shares with Japhy a practiced charity that would choke even a starving elephant and a hypertrophied self-consciousness equaled, to my knowledge, only by Walt Whitman:

" 'Well, Ray,' sez I, glad, 'only a few miles to go. You've done it again.' Happy. Just in my swim shorts, barefooted, wild-haired, in the red fire dark, singing, swigging wine, spitting, jumping, running—that's the way to live."

Ray's ability to see himself "wild-haired" gives some inkling of what lies below the assumed innocence and the hero worship. What I see there is a more radical and unpleasant void than Kerouac perhaps suspects in his meditations on Buddhist apathy and a more serious obstacle to the vision of universal unity than the refractory ego about which he occasionally worries. For though Kerouac is continually at pains to assure the reader that such

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and such a thing "actually happened" or is "actual" or "real," I am only assured that he is persecuted by a lively sense of unreality, by a feeling that all this is merely play-acting and that when the clock strikes twelve all the boys will find themselves safe back in bed or in their mothers' kitchens or, quite simply, successful on Madison Avenue or in Central Asia. When there is mountain climbing to be done, Ray and his pals form "a strange outlandish group"; they are "like two true mountain climbers" or "like straggling infantrymen"; and Ray says, "Goldangit," and Japhy says, with what can only be a child's false baritone, "Let's go men. . . ." And always they are "like shroudy monks." Of course, there are also the inevitable and ubiquitous witnesses, who constitute the razor's edge between the desire to shock and the fear of shocking and who certify the reality of whatever Ray is doing: the gaping old men, the giggling schoolchildren, and the disappointing ones "who didn't even look at us." In a pinch, Ray will go it alone, asking of himself, "What did people think?" To all this may be added Ray's assumed innocence, which, I take it, is intended as a sort of imitative magic.

It is precisely this void of the make-believe, of life by analogy, which constitutes the simple-minded revolt to which the San Francisco writers have given tongue and trumpet: a lesser nihilism which, lacking all commitment to the world, can no more imagine the world's destruction than it can its existence, and must shuttle between non-conformity's empty rejections and conformity's empty affirmations. Perhaps the only genuine and touching notes to be found in this book are Ray's double wish to rebel and still be accepted, and his refusal to recognize this, his desire to believe that because he is walking backward he is not going home.

Here enters the molasses—to fill this void with its euphoria, affirmations, pathos. Apathy is jazzed up till it glows in the dark like true vision—"the nowhere industrial formations of an America that is still magic America." That the poor may be good or interested in "culture," that the dharma bums are unappreciated or misunderstood, that "doleful bowlfuls" of soup taste better "than in some vast tureen," this is what Kerouac finds surprising, pitiful, moving. Buddha, apparently, is invoked simply to guarantee this molasses is non-fattening, for nothing could be farther removed from the fluid monistic universe of Oriental philosophy than this soap-opera of "togetherness."

There are good bits of nature description here and there in *The Dharma Bums* and Kerouac's pace is quick enough to develop an inane liveliness, reminiscent of a person jiggling his knee to some unheard music; we might call it "cool" dithyramb. It is hardly suited to the novel for it tends to monologue. Rather, like our unconscious knee-jiggler, it seeks to slur over anything disruptively sharp, radical, or fragmentary in order to maintain the given rhythm. And this rhythm itself I hear as a childish, inner little hum that corresponds to the narcissistic sensuality which seems to be Kerouac's main preoccupation.

It appears that *The Dharma Bums* has reassured our middle-brow critics and other guardians of public morality that the semi-revolt of our semi-literate youth, the Paperback Generation, is coming to a rapid end. The sheep has here doffed his wolf's clothing. Indeed, there seems to be evidence that in his next incarnation he is to be a watchdog—"In fact if a thief should have broken [into Japhy's shack] the only things of real value were the books." To which system of cultural assessment, I can only say, Wow!

The Road to Prosperity

PROSPERITY WITHOUT INFLATION. By ARTHUR F. BURNS. Fordham University Press. 88 pp. $2.00.

Reviewed by MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM

At a time when rising prices and recession appear to be going hand in hand, there is a certain wistful ring to the title of Professor Burns's Fordham lectures. Delivered in October 1957, they are concerned more with the problem of creeping inflation than with that of recession. This emphasis is due primarily to a belief—which Professor Burns might perhaps now be inclined to modify—that we know enough about the treatment of recessions, and are under sufficient political pressure to apply our knowledge. He cites with approval the steps which were taken in the 1953 recession; *mutatis mutandis*, he offers them as a pattern for general use. He believes that in general the first anti-recession measures should be steps to

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ease credit, followed by tax cuts, acceleration of planned government expenditures, and new public works; and he emphasizes that timing is of the essence, asserting that "even mild measures on the part of government can be effective in the early stages of an economic decline. On the other hand, if action is withheld until a recession has gathered momentum, strong and costly measures may prove insufficient." There would appear to be a certain difference of opinion here between Professor Burns and the administration whose chief economic adviser he at least nominally used to be.

Professor Burns does not accept the view that the inflation we have recently experienced is of a new and unprecedented type. Rather he thinks it is the same old thing—but with a few new wrinkles added. The first of these is that in the past prices rose sharply in booms but also fell sharply in the succeeding recessions; today, government policy is geared to preventing any economic decline severe enough to produce a significant fall in prices, so that each upward spiral starts from the top of the previous one. Professor Burns has a point here, but certain reservations appear to be in order. While it is true that in the past prices have gone down as well as up, the secular trend has nevertheless been up at least since the early middle ages, with the exception of a short period in the 19th century when the tremendous release of productive forces in the industrial revolution produced a temporary drop. And there are great variations in the behavior of different prices today, a phenomenon which he does not discuss in this connection.

Another change which Professor Burns recognizes is "that big corporations and big trade unions have made a difference in the workings of our price system." Of the former he says in a notable understatement, "less stress is being placed by many of our larger businesses on price competition." This, when anyone who listens to commercials knows that there are three leading automobiles, each of which is cheaper than either of the others and all of which are cheaper than last year, even if you have to pay several hundred dollars more for them! However, it is a point which he mentions only in passing; in contrast, he discusses at some length, and in more than one place, the role of trade unions in pushing up, and keeping up, costs and hence prices.

Since he believes that the nature of inflation has not changed, Professor Burns is inclined to rely to a considerable extent on the traditional instruments of general credit control to combat it. He points out, however, that the effectiveness of these instruments has been somewhat diluted by the great increase in the role of lenders other than commercial banks. And he sees a further limitation in the banks' relative independence of the Federal Reserve by virtue of their ability to increase loans by cutting their large portfolios of government securities. Another drawback of general credit controls, in the opinion of Professor Burns, is the undesirable side effects which these controls may have. In particular, he cites their tendency to fall with selective severity on certain sectors of the economy, notably housing and small business; he therefore suggests that general credit controls should be accompanied by specific measures designed to modify their effects in these fields.

But even aside from the weaknesses cited by Professor Burns, there is reason to doubt the anti-inflationary efficacy of these controls. Many private borrowers, such as utility companies, can and do pass on higher interest rates by raising prices to their customers. The borrowing of governmental bodies is affected to only a very small extent by changes in the interest rate; there seems little reason to believe that borrowing by the Federal government is affected at all. But increased interest costs are reflected in higher taxes, or in an increased deficit made good by further borrowing. In the latter case, the net effect is more likely to be inflationary than deflationary. In the former, the effect will depend on the particular taxes imposed and the ability or inability of the taxpayers to compensate themselves by increasing the prices of the goods or services they sell, as well as on various less tangible factors. Indeed, one may doubt whether raising the interest rate is ever unequivocally deflationary, unless it succeeds either in attracting new capital to fill an existing gap—a consideration relevant at some times in some countries, but not in the United States today—or in inflicting a major setback on the economy. In the latter case, mass unemployment may be expected to bring down wages, while bankruptcies and liquidation of distress stocks perform the same service for prices. As Professor Burns recognizes, the use of monetary policy to achieve this type of deflation is out of the question in the United States today. That being the case, it seems to this reviewer

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that increased interest rates can effect some redistribution of income and some redirection of capital; they can alter the relative positions of competitive businesses, and the fates of individuals, in a haphazard fashion; but they cannot stop prices from rising.

Nor does it seem that Professor Burns is correct in attributing a major role in the rising price level to wage increases. Prices have gone up least in the case of those commodities—consumer non-durable goods—on which the greatest proportion of wages is spent. Nor is this surprising: at no time in the last several years has the demand for food, clothing, and similar commodities come anywhere near the supply. On the other hand, there have been real shortages of capital goods, because of the fantastic rate of capital investment—32 per cent of our total national income, according to Professor Burns. If one adds to this the fact that it is precisely in the capital goods industries that concentration of control has reached its highest point, it is easy to understand why the greatest price increases have taken place in these industries. These increases—far exceeding the rise in unit labor costs—have carried over into consumer durable goods, which utilize the same materials and skills as capital goods and are indeed often produced by the same firms. Hence the primary cause of our present inflation would seem to lie not in wage increases, since the excessive consumer demand they might be expected to produce does not in fact exist, but in excessive investment demand. And this has at least been stimulated, if not in the first instance caused, by the tax policies of the present administration—notably the selective tax cuts of 1953.

A high rate of capital investment must necessarily result in either increased productive capacity, or in an increased degree of mechanization which will make it possible to satisfy the market with fewer workers. Both developments have in fact taken place. To utilize the new capacity, however, increased demand was necessary, and it was not forthcoming in the required measure. This fact was masked for a while by inventory accumulation, and by increased purchases on credit, which became more abundant even while it also became more expensive. But the ability of credit to expand consumer purchasing power is limited both in extent and time; the consumer who bought an automobile with borrowed money in 1955 was a poorer customer for other things in 1956 and 1957, because part of his income was being diverted from current expenditure to repayment of debt, unless his income increased sufficiently to take up the slack, which it seldom did. At the same time, both the rising prices of consumer durables and the decreased need for workers tended to narrow the market when it should have been expanding. Inventory accumulation was replaced by inventory liquidation. Under the circumstances, the attractiveness of capital investment diminished rapidly, and so did employment. The same imbalance in the allotment of resources to investment and consumption which had sent prices up now played a major role in producing the recession. But this did not in general bring down the prices of capital goods or consumer durables, since the monopolistic or semi-monopolistic producers of these commodities were in a position to maintain and even advance prices in the face of declining demand.

Professor Burns thinks that the best way to get back to a state of prosperity is to adopt fiscal policies similar to those of 1953, designed to encourage capital investment. This seems a dubious road to prosperity, and a sure one to inflation. It is apt to reactivate the same cycle of inflation and recession which we have experienced in the last five years. Only if we remove the imbalance between investment and consumption are we likely to obtain prosperity without inflation, and this requires a fiscal policy designed to transfer purchasing power from investors to spenders. It probably also requires selective credit controls, including direct steps to channel investment into such fields as housing, and it may even require price controls —or at least a vigorous assault on the system of administered prices which now exists in key sectors of the economy. Otherwise we are much more likely to have inflation without prosperity than the reverse.

Prince of Preachers

HE SPOKE IN PARABLES. THE LIFE AND WORKS OF THE DUBNO MAGGID. By HERMAN A. GLATT. Jay Bithmar. 290 pp. $3.75.

Reviewed by MAURICE M. SHUDOFSKY

UNLIKE his American counterpart of the mid-20th century, the East European rabbi of the 18th and 19th was expected to do little public sermonizing. In fact, the latter generally

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preached only on the Sabbaths before Passover and the Day of Atonement, at which times he would deliver an intricate discourse of a legal-Talmudic nature. For the other Sabbaths, the festivals, and special occasions, the community would hire a *maggid* (preacher), or, as he was often called, a *maggid mesharim* (literally, preacher of righteousness). The maggid was in effect the resident preacher of the community. There were also itinerant *maggidim* who traveled the circuit, edifying and entertaining eager audiences. For a number of reasons, economic, social, and cultural, the Jewish communities of Eastern Europe in that period needed preaching in a lighter vein. The maggidim filled that need. And as their popularity increased they began to collect their sermons for publication. This led to a considerable *drush* (homiletic) literature, which differed from that of Western Europe in content and in language. The Eastern maggid preached in Yiddish but published his homilies in Hebrew (it was not until late in the 19th century that some maggidim began publishing sermons in Yiddish). The sermons of Western Europe, on the other hand, were almost entirely in the European tongues, particularly German.

The prince of preachers was Jacob Kranz, known and loved by his own and succeeding generations as the Dubno Maggid. Born in Zetel, a small town in the province of Grodno, Lithuania, about 1740, Kranz began to demonstrate his preaching prowess while still in his teens. At the Yeshiva of Meseritz his explanations of difficult Biblical and Talmudic passages earned for him a considerable reputation. For two years he was an itinerant maggid; then he became the community preacher of the city of Dubno. Here he delighted audiences for eighteen years; and although he served several other communities before his death, it was with this city that his name became associated. The Dubno Maggid and his *meshalim* (parables) became bywords in the life of Eastern Jewry. But unlike many of his colleagues, Kranz himself published none of his homilies. The *meshalim* were collected posthumously from memoranda and notes and readied for publication by his son and a disciple, Abraham Flahm. These collections were as popular in print as the originals had been orally; they went through many editions which made the publishers rich and their author immortal.

The Maggid of Dubno, "the Jewish Aesop," has been rightly called "a decisive figure in the history of the Jewish word"; his masterful homilies constitute a synthesis of Torah with Jewish living. A study of his life and work in English has long been overdue, and Rabbi Herman Glatt has met this need with his volume *He Spoke in Parables,* which is a section of a thesis presented to the Jewish Theological Seminary in partial fulfillment of the Doctor of Hebrew Letters degree. Considerable labor has gone into the book. There is a forty-page introduction followed by seven full chapters which detail the Dubno Maggid's life, philosophy, writings, etc., etc. The footnotes are plentiful and usually helpful; the bibliography is adequate; and the glossary is useful if not always felicitous in its explanations. The most valuable part of the book is the translation into English of some forty parables, most of them for the first time.

THE Dubno's parables are essentially short short stories conceived by a powerful and fecund imagination. In addition to their intrinsic moral and artistic value, they also afford us invaluable glimpses of 18th-century Jewish life in Eastern Europe. As Rabbi Glatt writes: "His stories mirrored the environment of his day and ideas current in his time. The situations he described are far from hypothetical; they were real and were portrayed by the preacher with such vividness that the central characters in his tales become alive before the eyes of his listeners. And what a remarkable array of characters they were: from rabbis to petty traders, from the heads of congregations to traveling merchants, wandering beggars, and humiliated wagon-drivers. His stories told of tax collectors, barkeepers, innkeepers, artisans, students, matchmakers, grooms, householders, and housewives; his parables related the trials and tribulations of the Jewish farmers and farm lessees, the bankrupts, the servants, and the apprentices; . . . he pictured the inner thoughts, and desires, and the psychological motives of the rich, the poor, the wise, the foolish, the wicked and the good. And from this vast host of personages . . . and current situations he extracted the simple truths of life."

The Dubno's *mashal-nimshal* (parable-application) method is illustrated by this homily for Rosh Hashanah on once-a-year worshippers:

"A certain retail merchant lost his entire stock in a fire which destroyed his store and found himself unable to pay the wholesaler from whom he had received the goods on

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credit. On the advice of friends, the unfortunate merchant went to plead his case before the wholesaler; when he came to the latter's dwelling, he stood at the threshold wailing and lamenting. . . .

"His cries reached the ears of the wholesaler who rushed to the door and opened it. . . . He invited him in and consoled him: 'I see that you are an honorable man; you wish to repay me but cannot. Now since you and I have had many business dealings in which you have proved yourself upright and trustworthy, I will cancel this entire debt and even let you have a new stock of merchandise with which you can begin trade again.' And as he spoke, the wholesaler removed the note of credit from his portfolio and tore it into small pieces before the eyes of the overjoyed merchant.

"When word of how the merchant had been absolved of his debt reached the townspeople, one of them quickly arose, went to the home of the worthy wholesaler, and standing outside his door began to weep and lament . . . bitterly. The wholesaler opened the door and asked the stranger what he wanted. 'I have come,' was the reply, 'to ask for a donation of two thousand rubles.'

" 'Are you out of your mind?' retorted the wholesaler. 'Why should I give you such a large donation?'

" 'Why not?' snapped back the stranger. 'Am I any worse than the merchant whose debt of two thousand rubles you canceled but a short while ago? If you did that favor for him, then you can give me a similar amount.'

" 'How dare you compare yourself with the merchant!' shouted the wholesaler. 'Him I have known personally through many years of mutual business dealings. All along I have profited from his efforts; hence it paid me to cancel his present debt and re-establish him in business. But you! I have never seen you before. . . . I have never had any benefit from you. Why should I give you even one ruble? Off with you!'

"*Application:* So is the case, continued the Maggid, with a pious Jew who all year round comes to the synagogue, tries to do good deeds all the time, and has God before him continually. If such a Jew should sin occasionally, God will forgive him readily. But when a total stranger, who all year has not entered a synagogue or practiced good deeds, suddenly appears in the house of worship, wraps himself in his prayer shawl, and begins to petition God for a good year and for the forgiveness of his sins, why should God grant him such undeserved favors?"

Though informative and factual, Dr. Glatt's work tends to lack balance and judiciousness. Quite frequently important matters are juxtaposed with trivia and ephemera; and too often the author is descriptive when he should be analytical. The style of the volume—if Dr. Glatt will pardon me—is scarcely *glatt;* it is repetitious, frequently awkward and pedestrian, and occasionally even ungrammatical. "The Jews of Dubno," writes the author, "were submerged in commerce and shop-keeping, excited to make money and hastening to be rich." In another passage, while relating a *mashal,* he tells us that "a lack of sleep is of greater consequential import than lack of eating." Yet in spite of its deficiencies and blemishes, *He Spoke in Parables* introduces an important Jewish figure to English readers, and in the translations it gives them a taste of the *meshalim* whose author a contemporary dubbed "the father of the parablists in Israel."

Foreign Policy & National Defense

OUR NUCLEAR FUTURE: FACTS, DANGERS AND OPPORTUNITIES. By EDWARD TELLER AND ALBERT L. LATTER. Criterion. 184 pp. $3.50.

CHOICE FOR SURVIVAL. By LOUIS J. HALLE. Harper. 147 pp. $2.75.

FOREIGN POLICY: THE NEXT PHASE. By THOMAS K. FINLETTER. Harper, for the Council on Foreign Relations. 208 pp. $3.50.

DILEMMAS OF POLITICS. By HANS J. MORGENTHAU. University of Chicago Press. 390 pp. $7.50.

Reviewed by GORDON A. CRAIG

SOME time ago a report that government funds had been spent to support certain scientific analyses of national surrender in the nuclear age came to the attention of the U.S. Senate and touched off what can only be described as an orgy of outraged patriotism. For the greater part of two days the Senate chamber rang with impassioned avowals that the American people would never, in any circumstances, capitulate, that they would infinitely prefer—

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as one senior statesman put it—to "die on their feet rather than to be making plans to live on their knees as . . . vassals of the Communists." None of the studies that inspired this furor seem to have dealt more than incidentally with the possibility of an American surrender; but even when this was pointed out it did not stop the flow of angry rhetoric.

The Senate was bent on assuring the world that Americans never, never, never would be slaves, and did so. Then it wound up its business and adjourned—without, unfortunately, having done anything very substantial to remedy the deficiencies of American education, the lag in scientific training, the imminent and frightening gap between Soviet missile progress and our own, and all the other perils of which Senators Fulbright, Kennedy, and Symington have been warning us, and which, if not checked in time, may one day make American capitulation a possibility.

This kind of behavior, one must suppose, is a reflection of the times; and it is well described in a passage in Professor Morgenthau's latest book. "It is naturally shocking," writes Mr. Morgenthau, "to recognize that a happy chapter in the history of the nation . . . has come to an end. There are those who reconcile themselves to the inevitable . . . and try to apply the lessons of the past to the tasks in hand. There are others who try to escape from a disappointing and threatening reality into the realm of fantasy." Some of the latter group spend their time arguing that our present troubles are the result of needless involvement in two world wars. Others hunt for traitors who are supposed to have sold the secrets of our power to the enemy. Still others simply deny that the predicament is real or—and this may be true of some members of Congress—that it is serious enough to justify the steps that would have to be taken to remedy it.

No one can accuse the authors of the four books considered here of indulging in any of these fantasies. They neither deny the unpleasant realities of our world nor try to blame them on anyone; even when, in dealing with specific problems, they strike an occasionally optimistic note, their optimism is based on a sober appreciation of the facts of international life. Messrs. Latter and Teller, and Mr. Halle, for instance, who address themselves specifically to problems arising from the atomic revolution in warfare, seem to be far less gloomy than other writers on the subject. But this is

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not because they think the problems easy of solution, but because they believe that to acknowledge the fact that the nuclear revolution cannot be wished away is to take a long step toward solving the perplexities caused by it. After all, as Mr. Halle says, we are not the first people in history to be confronted with radical and bewildering change. We are not even the first to have a missile problem. Feudal society had to face up to the coming of the long bow and siege artillery; and we should be able to make the kind of adjustment they did—although, it is to be hoped, more quickly.

Certainly it is useless to hope that we can turn the clock back by some expedient such as the banning of nuclear weapons. "Prohibition will not work," Latter and Teller write; and Mr. Halle agrees, adding that, even if it did, "those who had prayed that this might happen might, too late, wish to change their minds," since they, and all of us, would be left at the mercy of superior Soviet troop strength. We should count our blessings. Nuclear weapons have given us the deterrent power that has prevented total war in the last twelve years; and now, as the likelihood of limited war increases, the development of tactical nuclear weapons will give us the ability to meet aggressors on equal terms and thus escape the fateful choice between acquiescence in aggression and resort to massive action to prevent it.

Nor everyone will be inclined to agree with Mr. Halle's enthusiastic support of the use of tactical nuclear weapons in small wars. Surely, until we know more about the uses and effects of these weapons in battle conditions, the safest way to avoid either being nibbled to death or drawn into a nuclear holocaust is to have as many conventional forces as the Russians. (Why do we always assume that the Russians have greater manpower resources than the NATO countries when the opposite is the case?) If, as Clausewitz maintained, war has a tendency to assume its absolute form, one can hardly be confident that a conflict in the highly urbanized European theater, for instance, would remain limited once tactical nuclear weapons were employed. In this connection it may be noted, for what it is worth, that Soviet military commentators have repeatedly denied that there is, or can be, any difference between the tactical and the strategic use of atomic weapons.

Those who are skeptical of the tactical use of nuclear weapons are likely also to have doubts about the validity of Latter's and Teller's argument that we must go on with bomb tests in order to develop "clean" nuclear weapons, which will be "the same as conveniently packaged high explosives." Yet even the most critical readers will have to admit that the Latter-Teller volume—with its methodical discussion of the technique and effects of testing, the radiation hazard to individuals, the question of genetic mutation, and the supposed effects of bomb tests on the weather—may, if widely read, help dispel some of the more unreasoning fears which hamper logical discussion of the nuclear issue. The authors do occasionally come close to arguing that a shot of radiation poisoning is no worse than a bad cold; but only occasionally. For the most part they are willing to admit the extent of our ignorance in the nuclear field, while insisting that it must be reduced. Like Mr. Halle, they argue that we will make no progress in solving the problems of our age "if we consider atomic explosives and radioactivity as the inventions of the devil," but only if we go on exploring "all the consequences and possibili-

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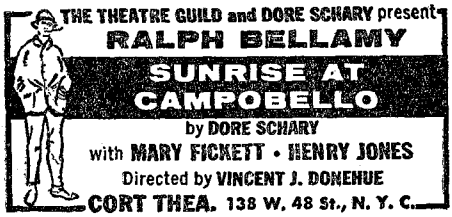
ties that lie in nature, even when these possibilities seem frightening at first."

A willingness to face the frightening possibilities of our time, in order to find a way of avoiding them, is also characteristic of Mr. Finletter's thinking; and his book will doubtless shock Senator Capehart of Indiana, who recently argued that to allude to the imminent Soviet lead in armaments is to give aid and comfort to the enemy. Mr. Finletter makes no bones of the fact that unless we do something about it very quickly, the Soviet Union will unquestionably attain a margin of superiority which will enable it to attack the United States without having to pay an unendurable retaliatory price in return. If, at the same time that they are pulling ahead of us in the production of intercontinental and intermediate-range ballistic missiles, the Russians develop their defenses against manned bombers, we shall find ourselves, for a longer or shorter period, dependent for our safety upon Soviet forbearance, and such a situation would be unendurable for a great nation.

This very prospect suggests its own remedy. Certainly it is time we stopped gambling with our future by insisting that we cannot afford to defend ourselves. Walter Lippmann recently wrote of "the human propensity to prefer a disagreeable fact which is still in the future to a disagreeable remedy in the present." Spending money on armaments is doubtless always unpleasant; but Mr. Finletter is surely right in his belief that it is unreasonable for us to be putting aside a smaller percentage of our gross national product for defense expenditures in 1959 than in any year since 1951; and he cites economic analyses to prove that our resources are more than sufficient to pay for the missiles and the aircraft (to which, as a former Secretary of the Air Force, he gives first priority) and the expanded ground forces which are essential to our safety. He does not, of course, believe that we are going to guarantee our future security, and solve all the foreign policy problems that nag at us daily, simply by spending more money on defense. He calls also for a revision of our diplomatic practices and, specifically, for some recognition of the fact that there are other nations in the world beside the Soviet Union and ourselves. A little less bullying and a little more attention to the sensibilities of others, a little more appreciation of the fact that when one has allies one must occasionally consult them, a greater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willingness to cooperate with nations which insist on remaining uncommitted, and to work with regional agencies which are not dominated by us, and, finally, a readiness to reconsider our position with regard to problems like Formosa and the recognition of China, would give our policy a flexibility which it has not had for six years, and bring it into some sensible relationship with contemporary realities.

MR. FINLETTER'S general line of argument would probably receive the approval of Professor Morgenthau, whose *Dilemmas of Politics*, a collection of essays which have appeared in various journals over the last twenty years, is too varied in subject matter, and too rich in ideas, to receive adequate attention in the present context. But it can be noted that in several of the essays reprinted here, and notably in those entitled "Neutrality and Neutralism," "The Decline of Democratic Government," and "The Subversion of Foreign Policy," Mr. Morgenthau touches on, and carries further, some of the points raised by Mr. Finletter. He too, for example, believes that a more flexible policy is required to meet what appears to be a change in the international atmosphere which took place when the Soviet Union wiped out our atomic advantage. The resultant balance of terror, as it has been called, has led to a breakdown, or at least a weakening, of the bipolar system that came into existence at the end of the war. "Nations of the second and third rank [now] tend to move toward the outer confines of the two spheres of influence dominated by the superpowers, and not only look longingly beyond those confines but also have started to pursue policies without regard to the preferences of the superpowers." With the value of American military protection diminished in the eyes of our friends and allies, new attitudes are required if we are to maintain our world position. It will serve no purpose for us to employ moral reprobation against these lesser powers or to be "impatient and disappointed with other nations who dare look at the world from the vantage point of their

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interests and not ours." To do so would be not only to fail to appreciate changes in the international situation, but also to misunderstand the fundamental nature of politics—the essence of which is self-interest. We would be better advised to define our own national interest in terms compatible with the national interests of others. "In a multinational world this is a requirement of political morality"; it may also be "a condition of survival."

To redefine and reconcile the seemingly incompatible interests of nations is the task of diplomacy. But the effectiveness of our own diplomacy has been reduced since the war, first, by a tendency to allow military thinking and the gestures of power to displace political persuasion; later, by the systematic hounding of able men out of the foreign service because of a misguided view of security; still later, under Secretary Dulles, by "a propensity . . . to look at foreign policy with a lawyer's eyes and to manipulate it with a lawyer's tools," scorning long-range plans and attempting to deal with problems without considering their history; and finally, as the Eisenhower image has faded, by the atrophy of government, by studied inactivity broken by an occasional grandiose but ill-considered gesture. As a result, "today it is the world that moves ahead and the United States which is being left behind."

This is very stern criticism. Yet few people who look back with Mr. Morgenthau to all the pretentious nonsense that was talked about the administration's "new look" in foreign policy in January 1954, or to the empty threats made later in the same year on the subject of Indo-China, will want to claim that it is unjustified or deny the soundness of Mr. Morgenthau's suggestion that rationality rather than the techniques of commercial advertising should be made the guiding principle of our foreign policy. Like the other writers considered here, he is asking that we take a good hard look at the facts of our situation and act accordingly. It might be well for some members of the Senate to read this book.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

MILTON HIMMELFARB, a staff member of the American Jewish Committee, writes often on Jewish religion and communal life.

OSCAR HANDLIN's essays and reviews are familiar to our readers. His *Al Smith and His America* was published recently.

IRVING FELDMAN, poet and critic, teaches at Kenyon College.

MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM is a COMMENTARY contributor of long standing. He is author of *American Security and Freedom*.

MAURICE M. SHUDOFSKY is assistant professor of Semitics and English at Wayne State University. This marks his first appearance in COMMENTARY.

GORDON A. CRAIG is professor of history at Princeton, and author of *Makers of Modern Strategy*.

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